History, Art & Architecture of Jaisalmer

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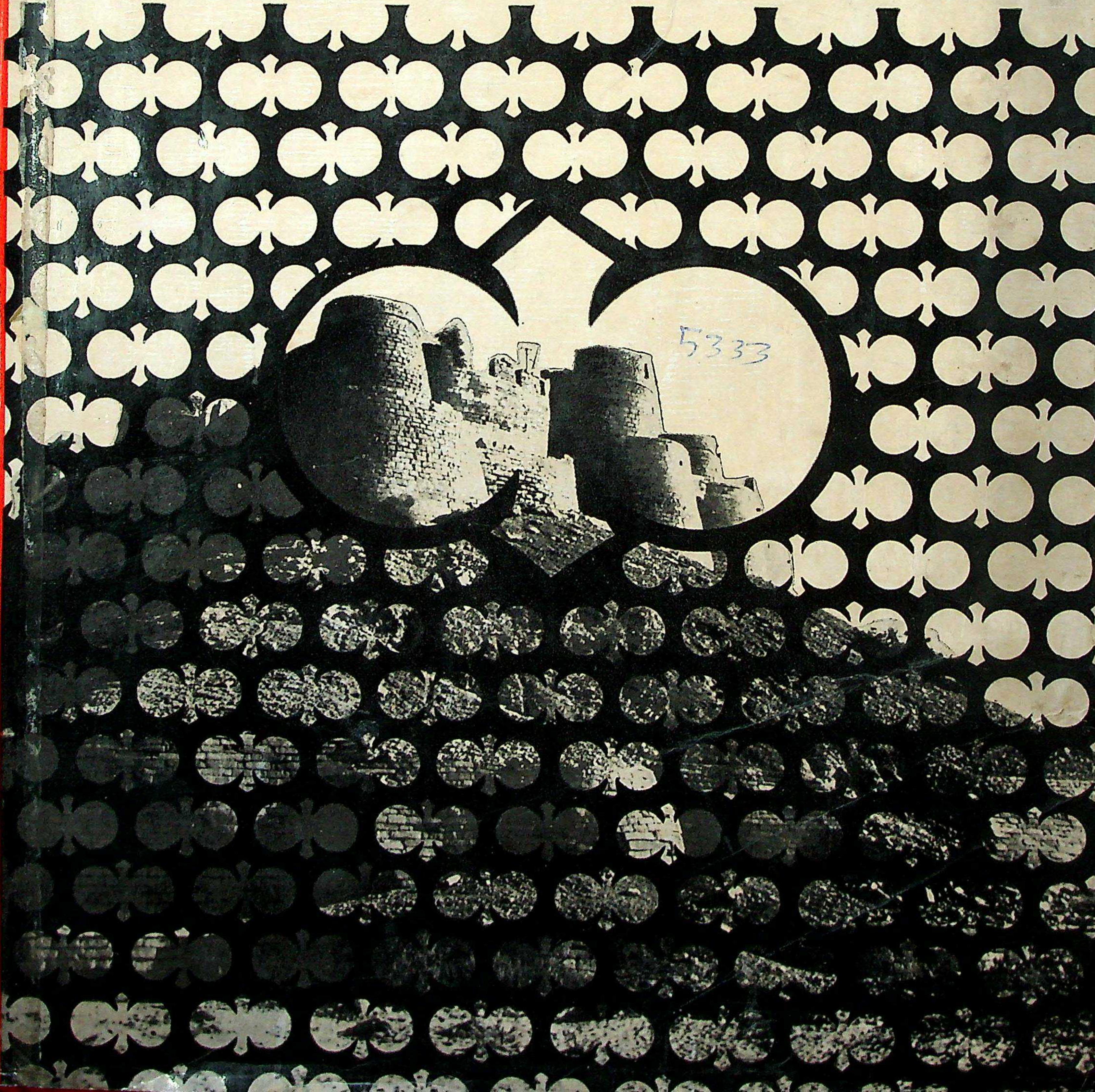
R.A. Agarawala



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HISTORY, ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF JAISALMER

History, Art & Architecture of Jaisalmer

R. A. AGARAWALA
M.A., Ph.D., D. Litt.

AGAM KALA PRAKASHAN
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Dedicated
to
the loving memory of
my nephew
Late Pawan Kumar Agarawala

PREFACE

The blooming city, Jaisalmer, is a landmark in the wilderness of undulating sands and scrub jungle of the Thar desert. Built in 1156 by Jaisal and named after him, this city of the Mahārāwals, had its own role to play in the history of medieval India, particularly that of Rajasthan, proclaiming to the world at large the valour and chivalry of the Bhattis. The fort with its embattled walls, bastions and gateways, the palaces and *havelis* within, replete with *jālīs* and *jharokhās*, the Jain temples, the precious collection of manuscripts of the Gyan Bhandar cannot but captivate the connoisseur and the scholar. The intricate stone carvings displaying geometric, floral and faunal motifs, the murals and miniatures in the *Rangmahals* and *havelīs*, do speak of the skill and dexterity of the stone mason and the painters' brush. They are mute monumental vestiges of philanthrophic patrons under whose shadows art and culture in Jaisalmer thrived.

The contribution of the Jains reflected in the cluster of temples with crowning spires and beautiful sculptures is not insignificant. The Patua traders enormously rich and in a position to construct colossal *havelīs* of aristic grandeur, beautifying them with murals and paintings and patronising artists were responsible to promote art and culture in this city. Besides, the business acumen of these traders made the erstwhile State of Jaisalmer an economically viable entity.

The art and architecture of Jaisalmer is influenced by several trends, *viz.* Persian, Mughal, Hindu and Jain. This can be discerned in the monumental remains here. Yet in the sphere of paintings, murals or miniatures, Jaisalmer evolved its own individual tradition which for the first time has been discovered and dealt here.

A study of this nature envisaged in the pages of this book is not possible without active and unstinting cooperation of many persons. They are too numerous to mention here. Yet I shall be failing in my duty if do not mention a few. I am beholden to the Mahārāval of Jaisalmer, who kindly permitted to view the Palace murals and paintings and to photograph them too. Likewise, Seth Budh Singh Ji Bapana, Chairman of the Jaisalmer Lodurvapur Temples Trust was magnanimous to allow not only to study the Jaina temples, and manuscripts and paintings in Jina Bhadra Suri Gyan Bhandar but also to take whatever pictures I needed. Shri R.C. Agrawal, Director, Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan Government gave me facilities to study the protected Patua *havelis*. Shri Anirudh Singh, grandson of Diwan Nathmal, was gracious to allow me to see and take pictures of the paintings in his ancestral home. Besides he recounted many an incident and showed rare books much valuable for my study. My grateful thanks are due to these two.

My thanks are also due to Sarvashri Suresh Chand and Kailash Chand, photographers, of the Jaisalmer city. Manmalji and Shantinath both of the Gyan Bhandar and Mahavir Bhawan; Krishan Lal, Private Secretary to the Maharawal; Nandkishore, Flok-lorist; Moha̤mmad Ali, Mason; K.L. Soni, an artist of the place, Sharma of the Patua *havelī* who had all rendered immense help.

Shri Agar Chand Nahta, Abhai Jain Granthalaya, Bikanir, Dr Satya Prakash of Jaipur and Dr Anand Krishna of Varanasi were very kind and helpful. To them, I am indebted. To Shri B.P. Bapana of Jodhpur, Dr. B.N. Sharma of the National Museum New Delhi, Dr. S.D. Trivedi of Jhansi, Prof. S.D. Shrotriya of Muzaffarnagar and Sardar Ganendra Singh of the I.C.H.R. New Delhi, I am beholden for their valuable suggestions and help. Also, to Shri K.S. Ramachandran of the Archaeological Survey of India, I am greatly beholden for all the help he rendered.

Line drawings for this book have been prepared by Shri Subodh Mishra and Shri Ahmed to whom I offer my best wishes. Agam Prasad of Agam Kala Prakashan, Delhi deserve special thanks for bringing out the book so nicely and in such a short time.

To my wife Krishna and little daughter Richa, I owe ceaseless inspiration to complete the work as early as possible.

5th Nov. 1978
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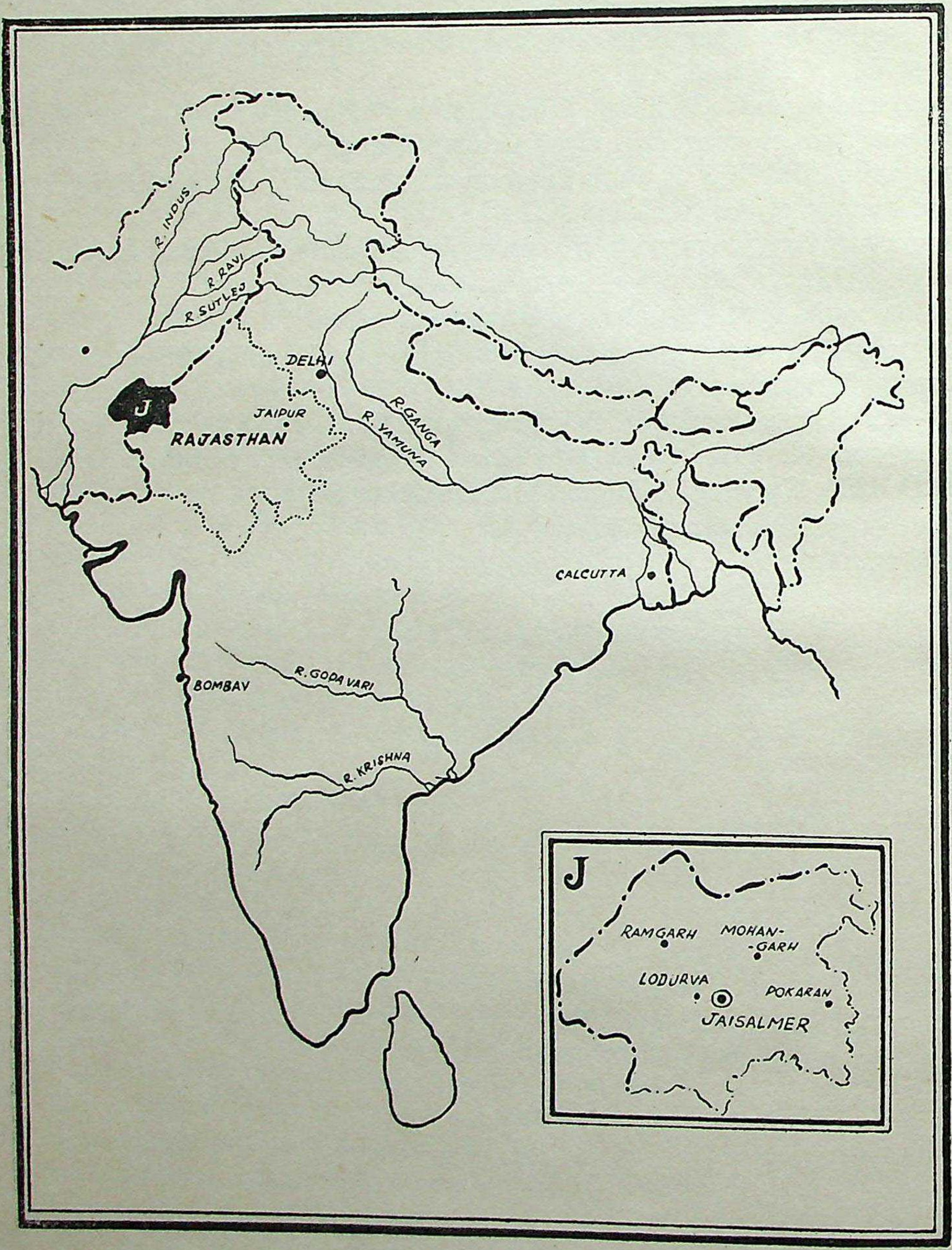
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R. YAMUNA
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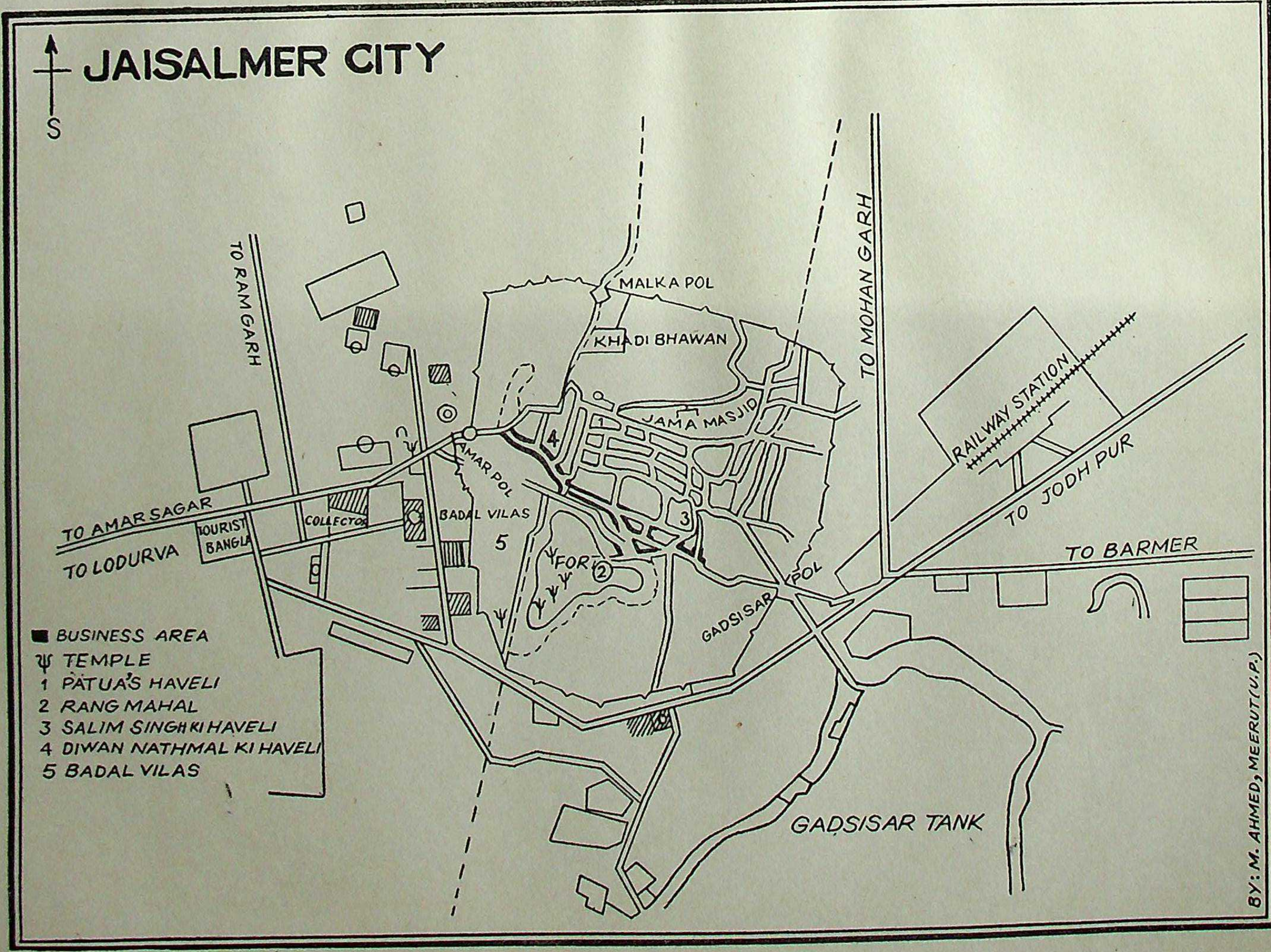
JAISALMER CITY
S
MALKA POL
KHADI BHAWAN
JAMA MASJID
TO MOHAN GARH
RAILWAY STATION
TO JODH PUR
TO BARMER
TO RAMGARH
AMAR POL
BADAL VILAS
TO AMAR SAGAR
TOURIST BANGLA
COLLECTOR
TO LODURVA
FORT
POL
GADSISAR
GADSISAR TANK
1
2
3
4
5
■ BUSINESS AREA
Ψ TEMPLE
1 PATUA'S HAVELI
2 RANG MAHAL
3 SALIM SINGH KI HAVELI
4 DIWAN NATHMAL KI HAVELI
5 BADAL VILAS
BY: M. AHMED, MEERUT (U.P.)

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CHAPTER I

JAISALMER'S PORTRAIT

Rajasthan known in its anglicised form as Rajputana has been the abode of Rajas. Here every city, town and even hamlet hums and bustles with pomp and show of forts, castles, mansions studded with artistic beauty—breathing life into even the inanimate stones and walls. One beholds an art gallery when he enters any Rajasthani city; and Jaisalmer is the gem in the crown of Rajasthan. The fort of Jaisalmer is located on a hill-top overlooking the fabled desert-city. In the early morning sun the city resembles a flowing golden stream of gilded yellow pebbles. Many a fort is studded with a plethora of palatial buildings of many storeys arresting the onlooker even from long distance, a mute witness to the sacred memory of those valiant heroes who laid their lives at the altar of freedom not only to protect the political sovereignty of the states but also the art, culture and tradition too.

I was suddenly shaken from my dreamlands of these proud annals of the Rajputs and brought down to *terra firma* as the Jaisalmer bound train nearing this city slowed down suddenly with a shrieking whistle, on a wintery darkness of 1972 descending across the western horizon; the train steaming across the desert sands in a rthymic *chug-chug*. With the dawn, the vast vista of sea of sands with occasional vegetation breaking the monotony opened before my eyes; a scenery so characteristic to this part of Rajasthan. Though the Hadas of Bundi and the Maharanas of Mewar had be unique examples of chivalry, yet Rajasthan cannot be better understood anywhere other than the region of Jaisalmer sprawling amidst sand dunes and noted for the architectural splendour displayed in every structure however, small or big.

As I alighted from the train my eyes beheld the simple and innocent people attired in coloured costumes with intricate artistic designs, some riding caparisoned camels with richly embroidered and decorated saddle. The onlooker with his head high traversing the sloping narrow lanes cannot but envy and resist the temptation to go up on the camel's back to have a closer look at the artistic beauty of the *jālīs* (trellises) and *jharokhās* (windows).[1] Inquisitive and with a research and artistic bent of mind I was on sojourn of collecting matter on the saga and arts of Jaisalmer, visiting the place time and again, coaxing, cajoling and interviewing the high and low, the plebian and the patrician, the old grey haired and bearded octogenerians, families of *diwāns*, masons (*gajdhar*), and sometimes in silent communion with mute stones telling their stories in silent languages, hours on end. I found, besides the artistic richness, that the morale of the people here was and still is as high as it had been in those old feudal bygone days. Perhaps this is the reason why the two Pakistani intrusions could not inflict a dent in this border city; on the other hand aroused their long abiding and latent patriotic feelings. The history, culture and arts of such a people of Jaisalmer, surely deserves to be written in letters of gold, to be told and retold by generatious to come.

Geographical limits

The erstwhile princely State of Jaisalmer is located within a rectangle lying between 26° 4′–28° 23′ North parallel and 69° 20′–72°42′ east Meridian. On the present map of India, it is the biggest district with the thinnest population in the State of Rajasthan. Anciently the region was known as Mandadhara and Vallabhadesa. It is bounded on the north by Bikaner and Bahawalpur (Pakistan), on the west and south-west by Kherpur–Sindh (Pakistan), on the south by Barmer and Jodhpur, and on the east by Jodhpur and Bikaner Districts.

The city of Jaisalmer takes its name after Rawal Jaisal, who raised the fort and built the city within in A.D. 1155.[2] The palaces and *havelīs* are replete with *jālī* work of a very high order.[3] Jain temples rich in their sculptural wealth and centuries old illuminated manuscripts are preserved in Gyan Granth Bhandar. This walled city already spilling over with the aggregate population of about seventeen thousands, is so small even to this day that one could very easily traverse its length and breadth in a very short time. Undulating sand dunes (*tībe*) lacking in fertility and water resources could not deter human settlements. Besides the chirping city of Jaisalmer, small towns like Ramgarh, Mohangarh, Lodurva, Tannot, Ramdevra and Kishangarh are tiny stars twinkling in the desert sky.

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[1] "Some of the houses of the *seths* have such beautifully carved fronts, that it is at first sight difficult to realise that the work is in stone", A. Adams, *The Western Rajputana States* (London, 1900), p. 88.

[2] *Vir Vinod*, II, p. 1754.

[3] "No trees interpose their verdant foliage to relieve the eye, or shelter the exhausted frame of the traveller", Col. J. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, II, p. 224.

Water Resources and Agriculture

In this region there are no perennial rivers. The few seasonal ones, such as the Kak, Lathi, Chandhan, Ghaua, Jiyai and Sukadi depend mainly upon the occassional and scanty rainfall. A few lakes (*sar*), such as the Gadsisar and Amar-sagar and salt-marshes of the rivers make the landscape quite interesting besides quenching the thirst of living beings. A few countable saltish wells are more than 300 feet deep.[1] Jaislu and Ranisar wells in the fort have been the important source of water for the population within the fort. In the endless stretch of the desert land, millet, a dry climate crop is grown. Barley, variety of grams and sesame are grown in the *khadīns* (fields irrigated with rain water stored by constructing small sand embankments). Rice is not grown in these parts. Besides agriculture the cattle breeding is another main profession which contrībutes to their economy. In fact cattle has outgrown human population with the result manufacturing of wool and milk production have become a sort of cottage industry. Other professions are weaving by master weavers, stone work and transportation through caravans.

The land

'The country is mostly a sandy desert, but there are many rocky plateaus and elevated ridges, with alluvial valleys between. The country around Jaisalmer is very stoney being a continuation of the hills of Balmer, . . .'[2] The vegetation is sparse consisting of patches of prickly grass, throny shrubs and acacias which sprout only in those

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1. *Vir Vinod*, II, p. 1752.
2. A. Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

days when water is available. But still the bounties of Nature consist of the geological richness awaiting exploitation. Small hills are here called *magrā*. In and around the city of Jaisalmer, a variety of stones are found, which, in the past, were utilized by the artisans for making artistic stone trellises. Among them, black, yellow, sandy-yellow, spotted, red and *bichhiyā* stones are mostly known and generally used as building materials. The yellow *chhintdār* (spotted) is famous for its golden lustre and silken texture, which went into the construction of many a Jain temple in the fort. Fullers' earth is also found in abundance. White and yellow clays are used as mortar while the fine variety as distemper.[1] Red ochre found near Pokaran and Ramdevra serves as dye. This place which was considered once as waste land is now fast progressing into a most prosperous region.

Flora and Fauna

Khezadā, *bavlā*, *lonā*, *van*, *phog*, *kumbhār*, *jāl*, *neem*, *babūl* and other trees are to be found among the sparse vegetation. Orchards are luxury and can be seen occasionally in a very rare spot like the Amar-sagar. Grass-beds or lawns are never seen anywhere. Animals, perforce have to move from one place to another in search of fodder and water. Sheep, cow, goat, camel, boar and jackals form the fauna here. Poisonous snakes are common. Among birds, peacocks, pigeons, crows and specially the white Palam birds (known here as *sugana chidī*) make the surroundings lively and interesting.

Climate

The city of Jaisalmer has a very dry climate with a very hot summer, a cold winter and sparse rains. The variation in temperature from morning to noon and the late midnight is a sudden phenomenon. Winter nights are much colder, sometimes bringing the mercury down to the freezing point

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1. "The limestone of Jaisalmer has for centuries been and was used for some of the elaborate inlaid work of the Taj Mahal at Agra. The quarries are mostly within a few miles of the capital, and the stone is very fine, even grained and compact of a buff or light brown colour, and admirably adopted for carving", K.D. Irskine, *Rajputana Gazetteers*, III-1, p. 26.

even. The average rainfall is about 178·5 mm a year. Shrieking wind is not a rare phenomenon.

People

Jaisalmer is fast developing as a trysting place for the tourists and dainty travellers. The scenery which is not at first a feast to the eyes is compensated by the varied beautiful architechtural edifices, *jhūlan jharokhās* (cradle-balconies) and intricate handicrafts. The people of the town are poised in short contrast against the Nature—honest against harsh, sanguine against sandy and tender against tempered. The population though predominantly Rajputs do comprise Oswal Jains, Sindhis, Muslims and Brahmins. Ever since the foundation of the city, they are living in complete harmony and peace, and truly represent the age-old secularism. Among the Rajput folk, Bhatti is a proud clan even to this day. These great warriors bearing Jewish features had been tough to the invaders[1] and infiltrators; a testimony for, their proverbial strength and bravery. A group of the Rajputs were converted to Islam in the troubled days under dire circumstances. Though professing an alien faith, they share mostly all the social customs, local festivities, and dialect. The ruined villages like Khaba and Kuldhara are mute witnesses to the fate of the Paliwal Brahmins.

Jats, Sonis, Khetri, Hazuri, Bhils, Jogis and such other castes and tribes have been enriching the area; their occupations being agriculture, crafts and masonary. Oswals, who hail from Osia, are a rich class reposing faith in Swetambar sect of Jainism. They earned enormous wealth and because of their philanthrophy Jaina art and culture thrived in this city. Now almost all the rich Jains have migrated to other big cities of India occasionally coming here: hundreds of locked houses are standing brightly are a sad memento to the once boisterous life in them.

Jaisalmer female beauty has been peerless. Their meandering gait with headloads water pots is a sight not to be forgotten. Locally, it is said poetically :

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[1] "The Bhatti Rajput, as to physical power, is not perhaps so athletic as the Rathore, or so tall as the Cuchwaha, but generally fairer then either, and possessing those Jewish features which Mr. Elphinstone remarked as characteristic of the Bikaner Rajputs", Tod, *op. cit.*, II, p. 229.

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Mārwār nar nip-je, nārī Jaisalmer
Sindhān turahī sāntrā, karhal Bikāner

(Males of Marwar, females of Jaisalmer, horses of Sindh and camels of Bikaner have no parallel).

Dresses

Women wear patterned bodice (*kudati kānchlī*), long frilled skirt (*lehngā*) and deep dyed wimple (*odhnī*) with a contrasting border. "The dress of the Bhattis consists of a *jāmā*, or tunic of which cloth or *chintz* reaching to the knee; the *cumurband*, tied so high as to present no appearance of waist; trousers very lose, and in many folds, drawn tight at the ankle, and a turban, generally of a scarlet colour, rising conically a full foot from the head. A dagger is stuck in the waistband; a shield is suspended by a thong of deer-skin from the left shoulder, and the sword is braced to a belt of the same material. The dress of the common people is the *dhotī* or loin-robe, generally of woollen stuff with a piece of the same material as a turban". Notwithstanding these common and known dresses of the people, muslim ladies wear distinctly different attire. The ensemble of *sūthan* (cusped trousers) under the skirt, long-sleeved blouse and long scarf is the dress of females; males don an embroidered cap and wear a long shirt. Various types of ornaments keeping with one's status are worn. Womenfolk prefer to wear ivory *chūdā* (a series of armlets) in addition to silver and gold ornaments.

Festivals and Fairs

Apart from all the Hindu festivals and celebrations *Sāwan teej*, *Gaṇgaur* and *Akshya tritiyā* are observed with particular and glamour gaiety. *Rangmahal* (hall of colours) in the fort portrays artistic representation of the first two festivals. *Sāwan-teej* is celebrated with pompous scintilating colour and flavour for it is a festival commemorating the reunion of Parvati with her husband Shiva and thereby indicating happy marital life for the participants. This is a time when the sky is overcast by dark clouds and the much expectant rain is awaited. The climate becomes cool after a long spell of heat-wave and dust-laden winds. The jains celebrate Mahavir Jayanti. At Ramdevra, warm tributes are paid to the memory of Baba Ramdeva every year in the month of September by thousands of people who throng here from far-off places like Gujarat and eastern Rajasthan.

Language and Literature

The people of Jaisalmer speak *Mārwārī*, one of the four Rajasthani languages, which is widely popular in the *thalī* (desert) region. A section use *Sindhī* mixed with *Mārwārī*, which is better known as *Dhāt-kī-bolī* because of its association to Dhat, a name for the country around Umarkot in Sindh. The Jaisalmer Rawals have contributed much for the cause of literature. Rawal Bhoj Devaji was a poet of fame who composed verses in *dingal*. He once wrote to his uncle Jaisal the following couplet :

Ād kuvād utrādhar Bhātti jhelan bhār |

Vachan rākhā Viy Rāvarā sāmhar bāndhā sār ||

(Bhatis have controlled the northern gateway and are adept in fighting battles. We honour the words of Vijay Ravji and would prepare ourselves for the neck to neck scuffle by taking the weapons in hand).

Of the same clan one Rawal Mulrajji (A.D. 1762-1819), weilding a very powerful and mystic pen and known for his prolific poems in *Braj bhasha*, produced many fine couplets such as the following one :

Ghanshyām bin ghan dekhī ghatā,

tarunī virahānal tap tai |

Chhirakyo nā gayo unko anganā,

varshā adh bichahun sūkh gai ||

Rawal Vairishalji had also been ranked among the renowned poets and he composed in *dingal*.

Truly, life pervades its myriad labyrinthine lanes with sides flanked by glittering artistic facades of houses. The merry laughter of the village belle in the hour of twilight, going to or coming from Gadsisar in their jingling anklets and melodious songs are echoed and re-echoed as they glide past the tanny bastioned walls of the fort. To enjoy this charming profile, one has to undergo an ardous journey aptly described in a local quatrain which runs :

Ghodā kīje kāth kā, pind kīje pāshād |
Bakhatar kīje loh kā, tab dekho Jaisān ||

(A house of wood, legs of stone, a frame of iron will get you to Jaisalmer alone).

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL PROFILE

Kāshī, Mathurā, Prāgvād, Gajnī arū Bhatner /
Digam, Dirāwal, Lodravo nammo Jaisalmer //

The historical origin of Bhattis can be inferred from this couplet which says that the Yadu Rajputs ruled and constructed forts at Kashi, Mathura, Pragvad, Gajni, Bhatner, Digam, Dirawal, Lodurva and the ninth one at Jaisalmer.[1] The origin of the Yadu kings can be approximately dated back to the times of the Buddha as they are mentioned in the Epics and Puranas. It can be further traced that these Yadu Rajputs belonged to clan of Lunar race who in turn were descendents of Lord Krishna.

Early Yadu Rajputs

A descendant of Krishna named Gaj or Gajpat founded a fort in the capital town Gajni or Gajnipur. He did not rule for a long time as he was defeated and killed by the king of Khorasan in a pitched battle. In this dynasty of Yadu heroes of Gajapat lineage, several generation later, certain Salivahana built a new capital and called it Salbahanpur after his name. Sialkot of present day seems to be the corruption of the old Salbahanpur. This chief enlarged his territories to the extent as to include the whole of Punjab including the old Gajni.[2] A little later, the Turks whose power was on the wane captured the gay town of Gajni in the times of Baland, Salivahan's successor. Bhatti, son of Baland gathered the countrymen and infused courage in them to get back the lost power.[3] This game of hide and

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1. Tod, *op. cit.*, p. 172.
2. Irskine, *op. cit*, p. 9; see also *Archaeological Survey Report* (*1871*), Vol. II, pp. 20-22.
3. "He conquered forteen princes, and added their fortunes to his own. Among his effects he reckoned twenty four thousand mules laden with treasures, sixty thousand horse, and innumerable foot", Col. J. Tod, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

seek for regaining the lost power and popularity in the area included in the present Pakistan and Afghanistan ultimately forced the son of Bhatti, Mangal Rao, to give up his efforts. Forced by circumstances he led his people to try his fortune in the Thar desert of India. Since then, this desert has been the sacred land for their political and cultural activities and the clan adopted the title Bhatti after the name of that great hero.

This is the early history of the Bhatti or Yadu race which has survived to this day inspite of many ups and downs. Reconstruction of their history in a chronological order is a difficult task; yet from the literary evidence spreading over a span of ten centuries before the Christian era can be constructed if one takes pain and tries to collect archaeological evidences. However, the first known fact which comes down to us is the founding the fort at Tanot in A.D. 731 by Kehar, the grandson of Mangal Rao, some 120 km. northwest to the Jaisalmer City. At a later date Tanot was conquered and ruled by the Bhatti (Yadus) Rajputs.

Dev Raj to Kehar II

Bhatti Rajputs were in constant rivalary with Barah Rajputs in the Thar desert area around the fort of Tanot. Dev Raj a descendant of Bhattis ascended the *gaddī* of Tanot but the threat of Barah Rajputs made him abandon the fort and join his mother's clansmen to raise the town Deogarh, now in Bahawalpur about 75 Km. from the northern border of the former Jaisalmer State. He fought the Barah Rajputs successfully and also conquered the Lodurva Rajputs occupying Lodurva, situated at a distance or about 15 Km. on the north-western side of Jaisalmer city. He pledged himself to bring civilization and culture to this barren land. He also assumed the title Mahārāwal in commemoration of his unparalleled exploits. Dev Raj's son, Munda succeeded to the *gaddī*. Later on, Bijai Raj II, the son of a Mewar princess, it is narrated, was enthroned in preference to his two elder brothers of whom one was Jaisal. Bijai Raj II is said to have married the daughter of Sidhraj Jai Singh Solanki of Patan (*c*. A.D. 1093-1143). Bijai's son Bhojdeo occupied the throne after his father, but was murdered with the connivance of the king of Ghor by his uncle Jaisal. Jaisal, thus, became the Mahārāwal. Lodurva remained a prestigious political seat upto his time but for a better and stronger defence Jaisal thought out a plan to shift the capital from Lodurva. He built a fort and the city founded by him was known after him. To this fortified town he shifted his capital. The new fort erected in about 1156 A.D.,[1] just at a short distance some 15 Km. away from Lodurva, famous for its Jaina temples and art. Salivahan I succeeded his father but soon had to face his another foster brother Bijal who had declared himself the Rāwal while he was away from the capital. Salivahan I having failed in his attempt to murder Bijal committed suicide in disgust and distress. The next ruler of the State was Kailan, elder brother of Salivahan I. He was strong enough to repulse and defeat Khizr Khan Baloch and hold the fort. Important successors were Chachakakdeo I and Karan Singh I who had been constantly busy in encounters over trivial matters with the Rathors. Lakhan, son of Karan Singh, was of an easy going temperament, lacking in administrative ability and hence his rule did not last long. His son Punya Pal was also incompetent and he was dethroned by his uncle Jait Singh.

Jait Singh who became the Rāwal is said to have ruled from A.D. 1276 to around 1300.[2] During this time, on the Delhi throne Ala-ud-din was reigning with his ambitions to be fullfilled. He invaded and captured the Jaisalmer fort in A.D. 1295 in order to punish the Bhattis who had way laid and taken away his treasure on way to his capital from Thattam and Multan. Jait Singh and his successors, Mulraj I,

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1. It is said that once lord Krishna with Arjuna came to the bank of Kag or Kak river to participate in a *yajna*. During that sojourn Krishna told Arjuna that his clansmen would, in some distant age, erect a fort on the hill top of Trikutachal. On hearing the idea, Arjuna complained about the salty water in this area. Krishna, then, smote the rock with his discus, whereupon sweet water started bubbling. A prophetic stanza in that rub was inscribed, which goes as :

   "Oh prince of Jadu-vansa : Come into this land, and on this mountain's top erect a triangular castle.

   Lodurwa is destroyed, but only five *kos* therefrom is Jasanoh, a site of twice its strength.

   Prince, whose name is Jaisal, who will be of Yadu race, abandon Lodurwa; here erect thy dwelling", Col. J. Tod, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

2. P.C. Nahar, *Nahar Jaina Inscriptions* (Calcutta, 1918-29), III, nos. 2112 and 2139, p. 6.

Duda and Tilak Singh, were among those thousands of Rajputs who laid their lives in their attempts to protect the fort; but without success. The control of Jaisal fort passed on to the Delhi ruler disheartening the Rajputs in their further efforts of regaining it. It was Gharsi the new chief (A.D. 1316-1361), a nephew of Mulraj I, who first frustrated Ala-ud-din but at last he too was captured and taken to Delhi. But because of his sheer dint of courage and intelligence he captivated the mind of the Delhi Sultan and being in the good books of the king, ultimately was successful in getting back his capital town of Jaisalmer.[1] But bad days were not yet over; he was murdered by a relation of his predecessor, probably Duda, in the year A.D. 1335. Next Rāwal was his brother, Kehar II, who ruled over for a much longer period of about sixty years.

Lakshman to Kalyan Dass

A list of thirteen names come to us about whom very little is known. They are: (1) Lakshman, (2) Bersi, (3) Chachikdeo II, (4) Devi Dass, (5) Jait Singh II, (6) Karan Singh II, (7) Lunkaran, (8) Maldeo or Baldeo, (9) Har Raj, (10) Bhim, (11) Kalyan Dass, (12) Manohar Dass and (13) Ram Chandra.[2] All these rulers, in general, served the cause of Jain religion in the town. The name of Lunkaran has been mentioned in *Tabakat-i-Akbari* in the description of an attack on Humayun in A.D. 1541. Another name Bhim is referred to in the *Ain-i-Akbarī* in the table of *mansabdārs*, and Jehangir has spoken of him as "a man of rank and influence. When he died, he left a son two months old who did not live long. Bhim's daughter had been married to me when I was prince, and I had given her the title of *Malikāh-i-Jahān*. This alliance was made because her family had always been faithful to our house".[3] Just after Bhim's death, his infant son was killed by the Bhattis. It seems, since then, Bikaner *darbār* took a vow not to give any daughter of Bikaner to any son of Jaisalmer since that infant was born of a Bikaner daughter. Soon Kalyan Dass, the brother of Bhim, assumed

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1. K.C. Jain, *Ancient cities and Forts of Rajasthan* (Delhi, 72), p. 372. But he has described the taking over the fort forcibly from the Allauddin's men.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 373.
3. K.D. Irskine, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

power and was so loyal to the Mughals that Jehangir made him the Rāwal of Jaisalmer.[1]

Manohar Dass to Akhai Singh (*A.D. 1722-1762*)

His next successors were Manohar Dass and Ram Chandra. After them one great grandson of Rāwal Maldeo named Sabal Singh (A.D. 1651-61), a contemporary of Shahjehan, sat on the *gaddī* and made some efforts to import Mughal grandeur to his native town. Tod has described him as 'the first prince of Jaisalmer who held his dominions as a fief of the empire'. Being a favourite to emperor Shahjehan, he could get both opportunity and time to extend territories in all directions quite comfortably. Sabal Singh was followed by his own son, Amar Singh (A.D. 1661-1702), a wise and valiant chief who restored the prestige of the house of Jaisalmer repulsing the Bikaner invasion headed by Anup Singh. But for two decades to come troubles and rivalry sprouted among the various claiments under different pretexts till Akhai Singh (A.D. 1722-62) who re-established his control over the fort and city. He was known for establishing a mint where Akhai Shahi coins were issued. He also did not have a smooth sail as the political boundaries had again been encroached in the areas of Deorawar and Bahawalpur. He laid the Amargarden approximately on the pattern of Mughals'.[2]

Mul Raj II (*A.D. 1762-1820*)

Mul Raj II (1762-1820) ascended the Jaisalmer throne and ruled comperatively for a much longer period but the days had always been unfavourable. The prosperity and stability achieved by the former ruler was devoured by only one event of historical importance, the murder of a *Mahājan*, Sarup Singh by name. The murder planned and executed by Mul Raj II's son, Rai Singh offended greatly the ministers and *thikānedārs*, and latterly the situation became so worse as to exile Rai Singh. This chaos in the political life was further aggravated by Salim Singh, the son of the slaughtered *Mahājan*, who fell upon the peasantary and Pali Brahmins so badly that they all went underground or were forced to

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1. K.C. Jain, *op. cit.*, p. 373.
2. *Jaisalmer Gazal*, vv. 12, 107, 108, 111 and 113; also Lakhmi Chand, *Tawārikh Jaisalmer* (Ajmer, 1891), p. 32.

leave the place. He had been unkind and cruel to Rai Singh and his wife by burning them to ashes; even their children were poisoned in Ramgarh fort. These atrocities and cruel deeds continued until he on his own initiative declared Gaj Singh (A.D. 1820-46) the youngest one among the Mul Raj's grandsons as the heir apparent. On 12th December 1818, the Britishers gave protection to the progeny of Mul Raj through a treaty. But the impact of the high handedness of Sarup Singh, the State was deprived of the talents and the trade.

Gaj Singh (*A.D. 1820-1846*)

After Gaj Singh's taking over in 1820 after the death of his grandfather, Mul Raj II, Salim Singh worked to achieve the status of a Prime Minister but was frustrated by the Britishers by not acceeding to his demand. Over ambitiousness of Salim Singh relegated Gaj Singh to secondary importance inspite of the fact that he was the chief of the State. All this turmoil, political unrest was settled around 1824 when Salim Singh was poisoned and killed for his misdeeds by his wife, while he has convalescing from a wound suffered in an attempted murder.[1] On his death, his supporters put up claims for Salim Singh's eldest son, but their efforts bore no result as Mahārāwal Gaj Singh declared himself as supreme power and embarked upon a few economic programmes which were well supported by Salim Singh's men as well. In 1829, the Raja or Bikaner marched against Jaisalmer over a trivial matter. Mahārāwal Gaj Singh was prepared to repel the attack if made but the timely intervention of the British Government and Maharana of Udạipur stopped them from war and irreparable loss. In 1838-39, he had to join the British force against the Afghans who led an expedition to weaken the Jaisalmer State and, in turn, to expand their territories. But Afghans were defeated badly for their ill designs and as a result of which the forts of Shahgarh, Charsia and Ghotaru were again restored to the Jaisalmer State.

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[1] It is said that Salim Singh was not that type of man as has been described by Tod under the influence of Zorawar Mal Patua who in association with Tod made a successful bid of character assisnation of his rival, Salim Singh. Supporters of Salim Singh hold the view that in the absence of Salim's power Jaisalmer state would have slipped from the hands of Bhattis. *Vide*, Mehta Ummed Singh, *Tawārikh Tāwari Mahājan Ke Khāndān Kī* (Allahabad, V.S. 1822), pp. 72 and 146.

Ranjit Singh (A.D. 1846-64) and Bairisal (A.D. 1865-91)

Gaj Singh died in 1846 leaving behind no male issue which compelled his widow to adopt his nephew Ranjit Singh (1846-64) who led the State and carried out the planned programmes. He also passed away in 1864 without any heir. Therefore, his widow called his brother, Bairisal, to administer the State affairs, and, as well, to occupy the *gaddī*. He refused the offer leaving the responsibility to his father Thakur Kesri Singh. But after a year or so in A.D. 1865 Bairisal (1865-91) was successfully persuaded to become the Rāwal and Thakur Kesri Singh continued, thereafter, as a minister to assist his son for four years continously till his death, after which Kesari's elder brother, Chhatar Singh became the minister. During this period, many agreements were made and revoked to strengthen and better the general conditions of the people. Mahārāwal Bairisal was a man of taste and culture, and also a philanthropist.[1] After prolonged illness Bairisal was released from the mortal bonds, in March 1891, without leaving behind any issue.

Salivahan II (A.D. 1891-1914) and Jawahar Singh

Under these circumstances, his widows brought Shayam Singh, of five years age, son of Thakur Kushal Singh of Lathi, as heir to the *gaddī*; he later adopted the family name of Salivahan. His days were no better than those of his predecessors. Famines, scarcity and state-debts tell very much the condition of the common people. His successor Mahārāwal Jawahar Singh made some efforts to strengthen and consolidate but without much substantial success.

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[1] Amar Singh Mahta, "Jaisalmer Kā Aitihāsik Vihangāvalokan", *Jwālā* (*Jaisalmer Ank*), p. 13.

CHAPTER III

ARCHITECTURAL MILIEU

Fort

Wandering in search of a suitable place safe and secure, invulnerable to enemies, Maharawal Jaisal reached a piece of plateu on which the present tourist bunglow is located. There he saw a very old ascetic named as Isa. Mahārāwal sat at the feet of that great sage and eyed for solution to his problem. As legend has it, that the hermit took him up the ridge of Trikutachal also known as 'Gorahara' because of the blending of sparkling gamboge-yellow stone with sparse greenery around the corners of this rocky mount as the best place. On the advice of that great saint and after convincing himself of the majestic height and its advantages, the Mahārāwal made up his mind to build a fort of his fancy on that triangular (*trikūtā*) hill. The foundation was laid on 12th July, 1155 and it took a period of seven years to build the fort.[1] The whole structure stands majestically with its 99 bastions each about 30 feet in height. The hill is 250 feet high and its length and breadth are 1500 feet and 750 feet respectively. It has a regular supply of water through a few wells inside the fort, including the Jaisalu well which is said to be dug by Lord Krishna himself to quench the thirst of Arjuna.

The fort looks like a scruffy old lion lying in wait for its prey, or again as though it were a prop left over from one of the earlier versions of Beau Geste.[2] Snake like meandering wall is built without any mortar—*chūnā* or clay. The upper most lining consists of *kangurās* and gun holes, and the *burja* (bastions) are well decorated with *bārīs* (peepholes) and *jharokhās* (balconies). The fort seen against blue backdrop of the drab desert, glitters like a golden tiara in the morning sun; and it boasts of glorious past steeped in valour and chivalry.

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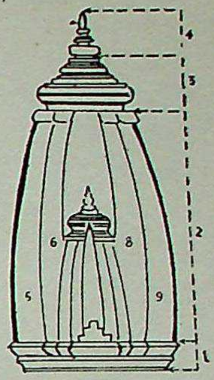
[1] *Vide, Swarnprastar se jadā yah durg dradh Jaisān kā,*
De rahā parichay sadā se Bhāttiyon kī aan kā.
and cf. Tod, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 230-31.

[2] Manohar Malgonkar, 'Respledant Rajasthan', *Orientations* (Hongkong, 1971), Vol. II, no. 10, p. 26.



ŚIKHARA

1. CHĀDYA
2. ŚIKHARA
3. ĀMLA SĀRA
4 KALAŚA
5&9 KARṆA-REKHĀ
6—8 PRATIKARṆA·
7. URU-ŚṚNGA

In course of several hundred years, a number of additions to this fort-wall were made. A second stage of rennovation and additions was between A.D. 1577 and 1623 when Bhim and Manhar Dass were the Mahārāwals. During this period three elegant gateways viz. Suraj-parol, Ganesh-parol (also called as Bhūtā-parol), and Hawa-parol (Rang-parol) were constructed. The front portion of the Suraj-parol is embellished with a *toraṇa-vallarī* with an imposing sun-roundel in the exact centre. It has rightly been called Suraj-parol for it had once been the first gate prior to Akhay-parol and greets the first rays of the rising sun. On its right a vigilance-*cum*-bastioned *minār* is capped with a voulted octagonal kiosk. This impressive *minar* adds the charm to the architectural *milieu*. Passing through its nailed-door way and ascending a steep-turn, one immediately beholds the Ganesh-parol, named on account of the Ganesh image in its main lintel. Further up along the pebbled pathway one again is charmed to see the Rang-parol where the ever wafting cool breeze welcomes the tired guests. The two smooth stone benches inside the gate on both sides offer the tired tourist a short respite. On its second floor adjoining the main building of Gajvilas, a hall decorated with beautiful murals known as Rangmahal is to be found and hence this *parol* assumes its name Rang-parol.

Besides, seven *burjs* including that of Bemisāl (unparalleled) were built to make the wall stronger and to provide defence. Yet another feature of this fort is that a second wall running parallel to the main wall constructed as *kamarkot* or *ghāghranumā* (skirt-like) and is locally known as *padā*. This is 15 feet high, just half the size of the main wall. Though shorter it is a strong wall. In course of time the fort could boast of immense strength in men and material and a cluster of Jain and Brahminical temples sprang inside. Many exquisite alleys like Kundupada, Bulapada and Chauganpada bear testimony to the prosperity of those times, in spite of the architectural alterations which took place time and again.

In the third stage ranging from A.D. 1633 to 1647 ninety-two *burjs* besides the earlier seven were added bringing the total to ninety-nine. The height of a *burj* rose to sixty feet from forty. These bestions (*burjs*) are pierced at the top with the hanging *Jharokhās* which present an enticing view of the bow, like bastioned walls and offer a panormic sight of the sprawling town. *Damdamā* (platform) on these *burjs* were used to mount the wheeled-guns and ammunition were store in the underground rooms. Presently the rooms have been altered to function as houses and the guns lie uncared and helter skelter. Around this period very heavy stone balls and cylinders were used as rolling missiles on the enemy down blown at close battle range. These can be seen even today almost on every *kangurās*.

The fourth stage of the renovation in the shape of the fort falls between A.D. 1722 to 1755 in the regime of Mahārāwal Akhai Singh. He got constructed a gateway near Gopi chowk and the connected wall adjoining the main fort-wall. During his time people started coming out of the old town into the fort to settle at *talahatī* (down slope) around the fort. They constructed houses, laid streets and formed *mohallās* (junction of streets) after their clan or profession such as *Patariyon* (prostitutes) *kā mohallā*, *Goyādanīpārā* and *mohallā rangrejon kā*.

The fifth and the final stage is from A.D. 1750 to 1850. Mahārāwal Mulraj contributed a strong boundary wall of about 30 feet height encircling the down town. It possess four important gateways namely Gadsisar parol (Tilowālī-parol), Amarsagar parol, Beron ki parol and Malka parol, besides two gateways on the southern side which were closed down later. This came up as a security measure for the towns-people who built their houses in the mushrooming township. Around 1825, in the early period of Mahārāwal Gaj Singh (1820 to 1946), many imposing *havelīs* and the Gajvilas in the fort were built. The arresting look of the fort sufferred substantially because of the encroachments; this happened when Mahārāwal Bairisal shifted the royal palace from Gajvilas to the newly built palace at Amarsagar parol. From then onwards the pomp and show attached to Gajvilas dwindled. The neglect and apathy of the people, and conservators of our heritage is well evidenced by the accumulated dust and debris here.

The fort is unique in many aspects. Unlike the Mughal forts, it is devoid of a well-laid out gardens, fountains, and other of her appurtances. This fort is akin to old forts like Chittor and others, which can be classified as orthodox and conservative forts. Here, in this fort are the residential palace-complex of the Mahārāwal, with the *elite* administrators and the rank and file. This historic fort of the heroic Bhattis has witnessed fierce battles including the *elite* two and a half *sākās*.[1] *Sākā* is a squad of army personnel who don saffron robes and fight the enemy till death and the womenfolk of the dead *Sakas* immolate themselves in the funeral pyre of their male partners. A number of battles were fought with the Khiljis, Tughlaks, Mughals, and the Rathore rulers; the events are perpetuated by the scars made by the fire balls and cracks in the wall. Cannons presently lying healter-skelter and stone balls found on the battlements speak their prower to keep their vow in frustrating the ill-design of the enemy. The heroic Bhattis have became famous and are rightly popularly known as the "defence wall of the North".[2]

To me, Jaisalmer is where the past lives in the present, where every stone tells a memorable tale, where century-old streets in their labyrinthine meanderings have witnessed the ups and downs of people passing through; where the facade of each house is an architectural beauty and from whence brave man filed past to meet the foe with the sole aim of winning or dying the field and where, beautiful damsels in gay costumes balancing headloads of water pots glided past in sheer ecstatic abandon.

Temples

In the days of Bhattis' rule, North-Western Rajasthan was a stretch of desert where cities, towns, villages and hamlets dotting the desert-face like minute stars twinkling in the dark sky. These human abodes were all virtually converted into unpenetrable forts of defence thus making this part of Rajasthan a big complex of forts of unconquerable might.

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[1] How beautifully Mahārāwal Mul Raj praised the valour of Bhatti warriors in crucial hour of a *sākā* held in A.D. 1295, is observed by Tod in the following words : "You are of warlike race and strong are your arms in the cause of your prince; what heroes excel you who thus tread in the Chetrie's path ? In battle, not even the elephant could stand before you for the maintenance of my honour when the sword is in your hands; let Jesulmer be illumined by its blows upon the foe"—*Annals*, II, p. 200.

[2] From local folklore the couplet in *dingal* language, "*Bhād kivād utrādā rā, Bhātti jhelan bhār*" which means Bhatti fought many battles on the northern front and they remained as unconquered gateway of a fort.

To the Rajputs temple is a place of supreme veneration and to lay down their lives in its defence and protection is a point of honour and prestige. In this endeavour the art treasures of Rajasthan was automtically preserved for posterity. The role of the great Bhatti warriors who defended the temples and the glorious art, architecture, and sculpture of Jaisalmer certainly needs to be written in letters of gold. 'The splendour of architecture as a crowning achievement of taste and inspiration for the realisation of eternity' in this little known place was conceived around 15th century, on the ridge of the yellow-hillock. The cluster of temples, of the *Svetambari* Jains and Brahmins, with their rising golden crests, is guarded by the embattled walls and embrasures and presents a profile of religious faith and spiritual emotion in this lonely landscaps (Plate 6).

This distant land, on a trade route across the Thar desert to Sindh, Kabul and China, acquired prominence in the medieval period. About two thousand Oswal Jains migrated to Rajasthan to try their fortunes and to find a place of security. Religion and business grew side by side in this sandy waste; the contribution of Paliwals and Oswals being not a little. Oswals, a trading community prospered in their business while the Paliwals, a Brahmin community, engaged in agriculture, strengthened the economy, as also religious tolerance. Several Jain Temples and a few Hindu temples were built here and attracted many Jaina *munis* and several Hindu *pandits*.

The Jaina temple-complex of Jaisalmer seem to follow the predominantly Jaina architectural principles generally established in the Solanki architecture of Gujarat. Before eulogizing the architectural achievements it would be better in the interest of fair evaluation to know the standard plan of construction followed in the medieval Jaina temples of western India, which seem apparently the source for the architectural growth here in this city.

Jaina Temple—Standard Style

Apart from mundane aspects of the temple architecture, it is the serene atmosphere in the Jaina temple which renders spiritual ethos to Jaina sect. The admixtured scents from sandal-paste and flowers, the delicate aroma of *dáśāṅga dhūpa* (incence made of ten fragrant ingredients) prevading the air, blending with the delicious scent of ghee from the burning lamps, in the main temple, tinkling bells and the jingling cymbals mixed with the reverbrating chants in *Prākrit* and *Sanskrit* and psalms in old Gujarati by the Jaina priests and devotees, now touching the sacred waters, now lighting the lamps, now circumbulating, now meditating before the idol of *Jina*, adds to the sanctity of the temple atmosphere. Without this spiritual and sublimated environs the Jaina temple would look more like a museum of statues.

Jaina temples of western India are patterned mostly on the Solanki and Vaghela schools of temple constructions with a little variations here and there. Jaina temples of Jaisalmer also are built in the same pattern. General description of the interiors and exteriors of the Jaina sancturies with their main features is elaborated here.

Jagatī is a vast oblong platform with a stairway situated in the centre leading to the raised floor which is called floor of the *Jagatī*. On this floor at a certain determined distance away from the stairway but on its central axis lies the focal point where the *mūlanāyaka* (main diety) is installed. The place where main diety is installed is known as *garbha-griha* and in front of the *garbha-griha*, there is a vast decorated hall where devotees assemble to worship. This whole set up is called *mūlaprāsāda* or main temple. To the *mūlaprāsāda*, *gūḍhamaṇḍapa* (hall closed with walls) is attached. *Mukhamaṇḍapa* (*trika*) or pillared vestibule and *gūḍhamaṇḍapa* are in the same axis and are interconnected. *Mukhamaṇḍapa* leads to *Rangamaṇḍapa* (or the dancing hall). The subsidiary shrines (*devakulikās*) enshrining twenty-four *Tirthankaras* along with their porches are connected with each other. These well-connected porches standing on pillars are known as *bhramantikā* or locally *bhamaṭī* (cloistered corridor) and it faces the *maṇḍovara* of the main temple. This cloistered corridor breaks at the point of ingress into the *Rangamaṇḍapa*.

The exterior structure of Jaina temples consists of the following features. The main *śikhara* or spire is the top of the main temple. This main *śikhara* is raised upon a square base and rises high in a curvilinear fashion. The other spires adorning the different *maṇḍapas* adjoining the main temple are constructed in a stepped-pyramidal and bell-shaped forms. This type of balanced construction with dominating main *śikhara* gives a very pleasing view to the eye.

The *mukha-chatuski* is the pillared porch attached to the entrance of a Jaina temple-complex. The *toraṇas* are the arches, like inverted festoons thrown in between the colums of the hall. These, bearing graceful and ornamental designs are to the Jaina temple as crowns and diadems are to the ruler. Three types of toraṇas arches are to be found in the Jaina temples, viz. the *Illikā* (crawling caterpillar), the *Maṇḍala-tilaka* (serpentine) type, and the double twisted *Maṇḍala-tilaka*. The first two are adopted from the contemporary Hindu shrines whereas the third variety is known from the hall Lunavashahi temple, which appears to be the handiwork of the architects responsible for building Jaina temples.[1] These architects have fully exploited the *toraṇa* motifs to their best advantage for intricate decorative details as seen in Jaina *Raṅgamaṇḍapas*.

Thus one is impressed very much by these religious edifices with the spires rising along with a cluster of minor *śriṅgas*, decorating the roof linings. The porches sometimes have festooned decorative roofs; the soffits of the *maṇḍapas* and *vitānas* (ceilings) of porches do bear pleasing carvings. The various *staras* (floor linings) in *jagatī*, *maṇḍovara* and *stambhas* are wrapped with human, animal and floral ornamentation including *sundarīs* (damsels) in lascivious posses. Among the structural features of the temple, *lolaka* (central lotus-shaped pendant in the ceiling) mostly in the ornate *Raṅgamaṇḍapas* stand out prominently.

The temple thus, functioned in a way as a veritable school for art exposition, besides being a supreme religious centre for communication between man and his creator.

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[1] *Vide*, M.A. Dhaky, "The western Indian Jaina Temple", in U.P. Shah and M.A. Dhaky (eds.), *Aspects of Jaina Art and Architecture*, Ahmadabad, 1975, pp. 323-77.

Temples inside the Fort

A cluster of temples which attracts the attention of a visitor are grouped together inside the fort. Parsvanatha temple dominating the scene with its high and glistening spires catches the eye. Tothe left is the Sambhavanatha temple and on the right, the temple of Shitalnathji is seen. In front of it on the left flank the twin-temples of Kunthunathaji and Shantinathaji are located. Opposite to this and on the right flank of Parsvanatha temple, Chandraprabhuji temple stands majestically. Adjoining Chandraprabhuji and its right flank is Rishabhadeva temple. Away from these cluster of temples and in the back lane of the Motimahal in the fort, the lonely temple of Mahavirasvami is situated.

Parsvanatha Temple

This fascinating temple was constructed by an Oswal Seth, Jai Singh on the precept of *Khartarāgacchādhīśa* Jinaraj Suriji during the reign of Mahārāwal Lakshman. In A.D. 1416, the consecration ceremony was performed by Sagarchandra Suriji. Later, a number of images were installed swelling the total figure of images to 1253 according to *Vraddhiratnamala*. Earlier the temple was also called Lakshmana Vihar, but now it is renamed after the principal deity, Parsvanatha, to whom the temple is dedicated, and which was brought from Lodurva after its capture. The architect who planned and executed the construction of the temple with its superb sculpture was Shilpi Dhanna.

From outside, it looks as simple as any other ordinary Jain temple but once inside the mini-court, the whole atmosphere undergoes a rapid change beholding the well-decorated and carved archway. This *toraṇa* enterance is designed beautifully and carved the charming dancers, and with a fine image of Parsvanathaji in its centre (Plates 70). The steps leading to the main temple beyond the *toraṇa* attain mirror-like polish due to constant use by *śrāvakās*. This stair way is connected with an orange *mukha-chatuski* (porch), the soffit of which is beautifully carved, and the three *toraṇas* forming its roof in a highly sensitive manner bearing the images of Tirthankaras decorate the front of the temple in an unusual way. A flight of stairs on its left takes the worshipper to the upper temple of Shantinathaji.

The whole plan of the temple follows the pattern of the Solanki and Vaghela school. This temple includes the *sabhā-maṇḍapa* and *grabha-griha*, including fifty-two chaplets with *bhamaṭī* and *balānaka*. *Raṅgamaṇḍapa* is an architectural beauty with eleven bejewelled pillars on which rests the *saṁvaraṇa* exquisitely executed with thick ornamentation on struts, brackets, and in every conceivable place. Pillars bear mouldings and charming human figure decoration. This temple is called *navtoraṇiyā* after the nine *torṇas* in the *maṇḍapa* pillars. The *trika* in its ceiling-round has one imposing five human torsos. *Dvāra-śākhās* are pleasantly decorated with the usual floral and animal renderings. The *jaṅghā* of the temple is studded with figures of damsels *mithunas*. *Śikhara* is a long rising curvilinear spine, clustered with *urū-siṅgas* and miniature *śikharas*. A row of miniature *śikhras* adorn the parapet of the boundary walls.

Sambhavanatha Temple

Situated to the left of Parsvanatha temple the Sambhavanatha temple can be reached through the *Raṅg-maṇḍapa* of Parsvanatha temple. The importance of this temple lies in that, in the two underground cellas just below the shrine, in the Jinabhadra Suri Gyan Granth Bhandar where important Jaina manuscripts and miniatures are kept in safe custody. The earliest known palm leaf manuscript here, entitled *Aughaniryukti Vritti is* dated to A.D. 1060 The construction of this temple was initiated by the munificient Oswal brothers, Shivraj Mahiraj, Lal and Lakhan, in V.S. 1494, on pursuation by Shri Jina Bhadra Suri. The temple was completed in three years by A.D. 1420, and in the same year Jinabhadra Ji performed the consecration ceremony with all gaiety. The Mahārāwal Vairi Singh took a keen interest in the temple. The master sculptor who carved the idols with divine beauty in golden hued stone was one Shiva Deva. According to the *Vriddhi Ratnamala* the images here total to 604.

The structural units are combined in one a grand spectacle, recapitulate the same features of the earlier temple described already. The ceiling of the *Raṅgamaṇḍapa* bearing the circular ribs with a lotus pendent presents a *Rāsamaṇḍala* of *apsarās* and *gandharvas* (divine dancers and musicians), and *Jina* figures sitting cross-legged in between the *apsarā* struts. The *śikhara* is not tall as compared to that of Chandraprabhuji temple. The *maṇḍapa's* roof is bell shaped. *Maṇḍovra* here is in sharp contrast to that of the Parsvanatha temple. Sculptural decoration– of dancers and other secular figures—is extemly rare. So tōo are the *Jinas* in *golakhas* (niches). This temple is worth seeing not only for its architecture but for unique carvings. On one Nandishwar *paṭṭa* (tablet) one finds a beautiful carving of barley sized temple and mole-like *Jina* image in it, which makes one wonder at the intricate carving capacity of the master sculptor.

One has to pass through Parsvanatha temple's *Raṅga-maṇḍapa* to reach the shrine of Shitalnathji, but the *mukha-chatuski* (porch) stands in isolation, situated to the right of main *torṇa* outside the porch of Parsvanath temple. A flight of steps lead the *śrāvaka* to the pyramidal roof. The plan of the temple is same as that of former two temples, through the *Raṅgamaṇḍapa* does not have open area and the whole set-up seems to be squeezed and carrying a very thin sculptural adornment. The temple is said to have been built by Oswal Seths Lunasa and Manasa; the *pratiṣthā* ceremony took place in A.D. 1451.

Two storeyed Shantinathaji and Kunthunathaji temples are jewels among this cluster of temples of Jaisalmer. The sanctum of Kunthanatha is on thē ground floor while the *mūlagambhārā* of Santhinatha is raised majestically on thr floor above. *Jagatī* covers a very small area, but both the colonnaded corridors, on its lower and upper run so close to the *maṇḍovra* in as much as the view of the *nara-staraṣ* on the *karṇa-pīthikā* is discernible only in the interplay of light and shade when the slanting sun's rays strike against them. The *mūlaprāsāda* seems to rest in a well-like recess. The so called *Raṅgamaṇḍapa* at the lower plinth has four *toraṇa*-pillars, bearing the load of the plain ceiling. On the contrary, the upper *Raṅgamaṇḍapa* has a decorative ceiling embellished with the celestial dancers. The roof of the *mūlaprāsāda* is designed in stepped pyramidal fashion with open balconies on all the four sides, flanked by *Vidyā-devīs*. This distinctive roof design has been richly fabricated with myriad lively and roaring lions and mini-pyramids arranged diagonally; this ensemble is crowned by an *āmala-sāra* and *kalaśa* (Plate 8). This two-storeyed temples was built jointly by Sankhalecha-*gotriya* Kheta and Chopra-*gotriya* Pancha to commemorate their pilgrimage to Shatrunjaya, Girnar and Abu.[1] Really what impresses most is that the paucity of space has been so beautifully balanced by the sculptural exuberance of divinities, divine-dancers and other decorative motifs. This temple according to local legend is said to have been completed around A.D. 1490, perhaps by Seth Sandass a good philanthropist.

Chandraprabhuji temple is located in front and on the right flank of Parasvanathji temple. Ahead of Chandraprabhuji temple there is a courtyard from where a staircase leads to the *Raṅgamaṇḍapa*. It is the only three storeyed temple-complex in this group. Structurally it appears to be replica of the great Chaturmukha temple at Ranakpur near Chhoti Sadari. Domical *Raṅgamaṇḍapa* is formed by eight decorative pillers on which rests the first floor stone-grilles, which bear the load of ceiling of the *saṁvaraṇa*. Amorous couples on the struts and images of Parsvanatha, Yaksha and just below these long slender couples adore the ceiling which has also a unique lotus pendent (*lolaka*). *Maṇḍovara* like many others is studded with the figure sculptures including composite Shiva and Vidyadevi forms. The parapet wall of the temple is formed by a row of miniature *śikharas*. *Śikhara*, here, is quite interesting as on all its four sides, it is open with balcony windows leading to form the third storey.. One *urū-śriṅga* on each side of the *śikhara* stands out distinctly. The line of curvature of the main *śikhara* and that of the *urū-ṣriṅgas* is formed by a pile of mini-*śikharas* in the same plane. Here the circumambulatory passages are dark, because they are closed from all the sides and lack ventilation.

Adjacent to Chandraprabhuji temple on its right flank, the temple of Rishabhadevaji stands elegantly. In the light of available records it can be presumed that the shrine was constructed by Seth Sachcha's family and was consecrated in A.D. 1479 by Shri Jinachandra Suri. It is embellished with over six hundred images, as stated in the *Vriddhiratnamala*. The temple in spite of the set idiom of medieval Jaina temples presents some new and interesting facets. The *Raṅgamaṇḍapa* ceilling, in sharp contrast to others, is devoid of any sculptural additions, not even a pendant. However, it bears now a few fragments of some paintings portraying themes such as the marriage of Neminatha, procession of *Tirthankaras*, etc. *Maṇḍovara* is also adorned with lovely female figures. Here the main porch is not followed immediately with the *Raṅgamaṇḍapa* but there is an open court. *Saṁvarṇa* roof is bell shaped as usual. Quite amazingly, the superstructure of the *śikhara* is mellorated with descending supporting-*śikharas* which, at its base is conglomerated with mini *śikharas*. Another interesting feature is that the east side balcony rising on the same elevation is embellished with a pyramidal roof exhibiting an exuberance of spirited lions (Plate 11). The embattled parapet wall around the *śikhara* is another pleasant and charming feature of this temple.

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[1] P.C. Nahar, *Jaina Lekha Sangraha*, Vol. III, Inscription no. 2154.

The last among the Jaina temples in the fort is of Mahavirasvamy in Chauganpara. The temple in its plan and elevation is constructed after the general norm. The sculptures and carvings present nothing extraordinary. The temple was built in A.D. 1524 according to *Vriddhiratnamala*. Thus Jaisalmer, being predominantly a city of affulent *Svetamber* Jains, witnessed the construction of many splendid temples in the medieval period. Down below, in the labyrinthine streets many *upāsarās*, *dehrāsaras* and lesser known temples were constructed with artistic facade.

Temple at Lodurva

Fifteen kilometres away from Jaisalmer on its western flank at Lodurva, a gorgeous temple dedicated to Parsvanatha was raised but was destroyed during the upsurge of Gori in A.D. 1152. Again, in A.D. 1615 on its ruins, Seth Thaharushah constructed the present temple which stands majestically on the western bank of river Kak, a seasonal river.

The original idol, the *mūlanāyaka* of Parsvanatha adorning the *mūlagambhārā* here was taken to the temple in the Jaisalmler fort, and to fill the void as a replacement, Thahrushah installed a Parsvanath image with multi-hooded serpent canopy, in black stone (*kasautī-patthar*) sculptured by a carver of Gujarat, who was amply rewarded by the Seth for the high quality of execution of the divine image. The embattled fortification wall of the temple is pierced on its eastern side for an enterance, beyond which the visitor beholds a fully carved arched gate (*toraṇa-dvāra*). Though the principal setting of the different apartments is normal yet one perceives the changes in form rather than in content. The eight-sided pyramidal roof covers the *Raṅgamaṇḍapa*, which presents a sombre silence in constrast the clamour of celestial *vādikāyen* (musicians) as seen elsewhere in some of the temples in the fort. The entire varandah and circumbulatory passage are completely covered, yet the Sun's rays enter gracefully through slanting trellis fencing creating a sanguine atmosphere (Plate 39). The main temple is flanked by four temples, one on each corner of the wall. These temples at the corners follow the elevational design of the standard type. The south-eastern temple is dedicated to Adinatha, the southern to Ajitanatha, the north-western to Sambhavanatha and the north-eastern to Chintamani Parsvanatha respectively. These four temples are later additions executed in A.D. 1618. The *śikhara* over the *mūlaprāsāda* is impressively decked with *urū-śriṅgas* including the superimposed miniature *śikharas* besides a projecting balcony on each side. The whole structure including the *kalpa* tree presents a charming profile amid the vast barren land. Apart from these jain places of worship a number of Saivite temples loose sculptures, etc., lie here and there in isolation.

Temples around Amarsagar

Between Jaisalmer and Lodurva, another Jaina temple dedicated to Adishvara Bhagwan is situated on the bank of Amarsagar, in romantic surroundings. Lush vegetation and colourful gardens, and mellow orchards present pleasing sight in the otherwise drab landscape of this desert. *Pagavābs* (step-wells) particularly developed as a summer resort for the rich add extra charm to this place. Against this background, a double storeyed temple dedicated to Adishvar Bhagwan referred to stands singularly beautiful, a mute reminder to the fact that enthusiasm for building temples had not died out even as late as A.D. 1871. This shrine built by Seth Himmat Ramji Bafana exhibits a unique facade not seen elsewhere. The idiom translated in the structure is quite different from the temples inside the fort. Instead of *mukha-*

chatuski, a latticed varandah has been incorparated (Plate 34), and *Raṅgamaṇḍapa* has been replaced by a long decorative verandah. But on its second storey *mukha-chatuski* is added on each side to the rising curvilineer *śikhara*, with a *gokhada* pierced at its top. Unlike in other temples, water-streams and pebbled way add additional beauty. By the side of main road on the northern bank, two other temples dedicated to Adinathaji were also built in A.D. 1840 and A.D. 1893 respectively.

A number of Hindu temples also adorn Jaisalmer city. Mahārāwals were Hindu kings of Vaishnavite leanings. They worshipped the deities Kuldevī and Lakshminath. Adi Narain or Tikam Rai temple near Hawa parol, Svangiyandevi temple and those of Shitalamata, Ranchhod, Ratneshvar, Surya, and Rajeshwari are the most notable Hindu temples of Jaisalmer city. These temples are architecturally and in sculptural wealth unimportant. But the temple of Lakshminathaji attracts crowds. This temple in the fort situated near the Jaisalu well was built as early as A.D. 1437 during the time of Mahārāwal Vairisi. Although lacking sculptural decoration the structural planning of the temple is worth notice. There are many shrines of religious and spritual sanctity in and around the Jaisalmer city but architecturally of no consequence.

Living Abodes

Mahārāwals being rulers were considered divine commanding unflinching loyality and devotion from their subjects. The Mahārāwals lived in palatial abodes just keeping with the status of the head of a State and also to impress their superiority over other nobles especially the *nāgar-seth*s who also built towering mansions equal to those of Maharajas. One more noteworthy point was that kings of Rajasthan built their forts and castles on some majestic height; Mahārāwal Jaisal erected the crowning fort on the hill-top of Trikuta. Since then, a number of royal apartments and *havelīs* in the town were constructed by the succeeding Mahārāwals. At the turn of the 19th century, Maharajas had began imitating British way of life. Newly built palaces provided with modern amenities became abodes of Mahārāwals and as a result, many of the abandoned palaces of kings and noblemen dust laden and in disrepair were converted into schools or offices with utter neglect of art and architectural appreciation.

Palaces in the Fort

Inside the fort, *chauhatā* (square) is surrounded by towering buildings. The cluster consists five tastefully carved mansions, namely Rangmahal, Sarvottamvilas, Gajmahal, Zenanamahal and Motimahal. Rangmahal just above the Hawa-parol was built by Mahārāwal Mulraj II (1762-1820). This hall has rightly been called Rangmahal as it is entirely embellished with murals and arabesques. Balconies on eastern and northern sides provide ample light; architecturally it is not of much importance. The apartment which has been called 'the best among the mansions' (Sarvottamvilas) was built by Mahārāwal Akhai Singh (A.D. 1722-1762). This is decorated with blue tiles and glass-mosaic works and as such 'Shishmahal' would have been the appropriate name. This comprises a set of a few halls raised on Rangmahal. Adjacent to these apartments, there is the Gajvilas standing elegently on a high plinth, constructed by Mahārāwal Gaj Singh in A.D. 1884. Its facade, to the east of *Chauhata* (an open square), is quite interesting (Plate 18). The construction rests on the *surangdār* pillars and cusped arches, intercepted by the intermittent projecting balconies, *jharokhās* and *bārīs* (Plate 19). Gajvilas is a three storeyed building with a row of balconies on each tier. *Rāvatīs* (domical roof of the bays) and *nokdār* (pointed cusped shade-lining) running from pillar to pillar give an impression of an anchored ship in a harbour.

Just across the winding lane of Chauganpara, another interesting palace is the Motimahal. It was constructed by Mul Raj II in 1813, and like the Gajvilas it is also three-tiered, but without balcony. The front is decorated with heavy floral motifs, particularly in the stone-doors. Its first storey is called Sabhaniwas since it is formed by long spacious hall meant to hold meetings; at present however, it has been converted into a school. The rooms of the next storey are decorated with mirrors and the antechambers have been planned into one complex known as Motimahal. Traceries decorate the exterior as well as the interior. Zenanamahal, just behind Sarvottamvilas and the Rangmahal, present a vacant look bearing shallow decoration in the blind-spaces. Its facade is inconspicuous but an arch decoration in the Kanwarpada, now in dilapidated condition, is a centre of attraction (Plate 20).

Badalvilas

With the changing norms of living under the British impact, the Mahārāwals like their counterparts in other States decided to shift their residence to some suitable building. Near Amarsagar-parol, Mahārāwal Bairisal (1865-1891) built a towering palace known as Badalvilas (Plates 24 and 25). This imposing structure is six storeyed with a number of anterooms and narrow corridors. Its outer face is decorated with oriel bays and balconies. Flabby *rāvatī* (dome) and the rising storeys resemble *tāziā* (a paper-structure taken in procession by Muslims) during *Muharram*.

Javaharvilas

Fine artistic stone-carvings did not suffer decadence till the end of 19th century. This fact is borne out from the facades of Javaharvilas. The whole plan has so artistically been contrived that the pearl-like southern facade imparts a sense of freshness and satisfaction. The richly carved front and the traceries therein prove once again the dextrous skill of the stone masons. The central oriel bay is flanked by beautiful flights of stairs and balconies (Plates 22 and 23). The interior walls seem to follow the Victorian fashion where the walls are decorated with painting. The whole unit stands magnificiently as a warm tribute to Mahārāwal Jawahar Singh, the builder of this palace.

These are some eloquent examples extolling the taste of Mahārāwals who were liberal in patronising art so much so each house became a treasure house of artistic achievement.

Havelīs

The feudal style of living of the Rajputs warranted residence in semi-luxurious mansions by nobles ministers as well as top ranking bankers in their states. Besides, some powerful bankers and councillors had their own *havelīs* constructed with all the regal pomp and show.

Patuā-havelīs

The finest among the *havelīs* is a group of five, meant for the five Patua sons. Jaisalmer city had been a centre for traders indulging in carvan-trade with the neighbouring States. Its population consists of good entrepreneurs till to-day; Oswals engaged in trade, Paliwals in tilling the *khadīns* and Muslims in local crafts passed prosperous days which is reflected in the fronts of their houses loocated in the streets and lanes of Jaisalmer city.

Patuas who constructed wonderful *havelīs* were a class who used to deal in *zarī* and *bādlā* (silvery or golden threads) ornaments as the *patuā* title suggests.[1] In this *patuā*-clan one notable Seth was Dev Raj. His son Guman Chand was an intelligent shrewd businessman, who amassed wealth by dint of his hard intelligent work. He had five sons, namely, Bahadurmal, Sawai Ram, Magani Ram, Jorawarmal and Partap Chand. Jorawarmal, the fourth one, attained unique reputation and rank among the then moneylenders and traders, in the early decades of the 19th century. He substantially revitalised the ruined exchequer of the Udaipur State at the insistance of Col. Tod and Maharana Bhim Singh. He became so powerful that Mahārāwal Gaj Singh of Jaisalmer, Maharaja Ratan Singh of Bikaner and Maharajas of Jodhpur, Kishangarh, Indore, Ratlam States and many others including the Britishers and the Marathas sought his intervention in matters of treaties and to maintain their prestige. Though finally settled down to live in Indore, he had business concerns at more than 300 places in India and abroad. His prestige was so high that Maharajas usually favoured him and members of his family against the established protocol. Political Agent T. Robinson in one of his letters dated 20th August 1849 addressed to him, eulogised the noble qualities and philanthrophic nature of this Seth. His son, Chandanmal, got married in the year 1825 A.D., incurring an expenditure of over Rs. ten lakhs. He often sponsored the Sangha and quite often visited his home-town, Jaisalmer. He died in the year 1851. His son Chandanmal, followed his foot prints and lived till 1924. Among his grandsons, Siremal Bafana born in 1882 remained alive till 1964 serving the erstwhile State of Indore as Prime Minister.

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[1] P.C. Nahar, *op cit.*, p. 30.

No doubt that Patua Guman's fourth son, Jorawarmal, rose to an exalted position; his other sons too did not fail to make fortune and fame. His first son Bahadurmal was attached to the Kota state and likewise Sawai Ram, the second one to Jhalarapatan State, the third Magani Ram to Ratlam and the fifth Partap Chand to Jaisalmer Court, where a descendent of the family, one Himmat Ram constructed the beautiful latticed temple of Adishvara at Amarsagar. In this temple, inscription is found giving the genealogy of the *Patuā* family.[1]

This brief account of Bafana *gotriya* Patuas shows that the different branches of the Guman Chand family prospered well. It was due to the sole effort of Guman Chand that a row of the five enchanting *havelīs* flanking the northern side of the slanting lane presently adjoining the Mahavir Bhawan stand facing the Jaisal fort ever since the first decade of the 19th century. One facade, each of the five *havelī's* has been well decorated with splendid carvings, *jharokhās*, *bārīs*, sun-holes and *kanwals* (oriel windows). The avenue of the *havelīs* seen through the patua-parol is the most enchanting sight.

Each of these *havelīs* are six storeyed approached through successive flights on the *pidākhiyās* (steps) and *hathinī* (broad stone-slab at intervals for resting) usually set in the left. The main gate is on a high plinth of about 7′ or 8′ high reached by a flight of steps. High plinth has always been favoured to protect the houses from dust laden lanes. Here the *otā* (platform) planned along the main gate is partly covered and the ceiling of *mol* (drawingroom) covers vestibule thus formed, which also projects out to cover the small cells designed in the basement along the wayside. The front of the ground floor is called *modā* and its back the *pathiyāl*. These, at the lowest level are well lit and ventilated and by holes pierced in the form of *tārāphūl*—star-shaped holes (Plate 13). The chambers at the ground level were designed to store merchandise, etc. in large quantities; those of first floor and above were meant for residential purposes of the family members. The *mol* is generally found decorated at its best, and its back portion on

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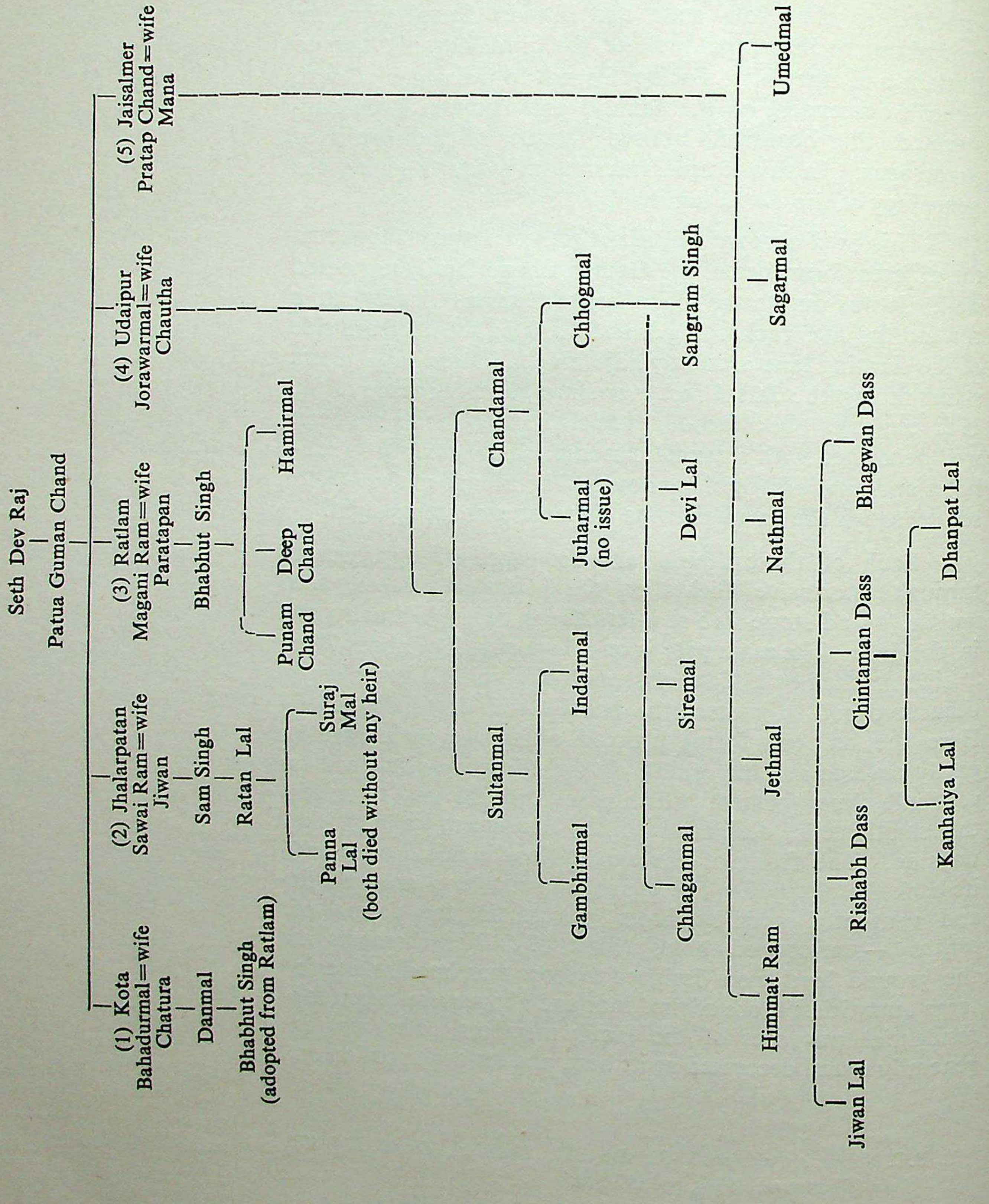
[1] P.C. Nahar, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-32; also S.R. Bhandari, *Oswal Jātī Kā Itihās* (Bhanpura, 1934), pp. 197-218.


Seth Dev Raj
Patua Guman Chand
(1) Kota Bahadurmal=wife Chatura
(2) Jhalarpatan Sawai Ram=wife Jiwan
(3) Ratlam Magani Ram=wife Paratapan
(4) Udaipur Jorawarmal=wife Chautha
(5) Jaisalmer Pratap Chand=wife Mana
Danmal
Bhabhut Singh (adopted from Ratlam)
Sam Singh
Ratan Lal
Panna Lal
Suraj Mal
(both died without any heir)
Bhabhut Singh
Punam Chand
Deep Chand
Hamirmal
Sultanmal
Chandamal
Gambhirmal
Indarmal
Juharmal (no issue)
Chhogmal
Chhaganmal
Siremal
Devi Lal
Sangram Singh
Himmat Ram
Jethmal
Nathmal
Sagarmal
Umedmal
Jiwan Lal
Rishabh Dass
Chintaman Dass
Bhagwan Dass
Kanhaiya Lal
Dhanpat Lal

this floor is called *medī*. Inside, the halls or rooms have *bilātī* (cornice), *panihārā* (niche), *beel* (projected slab just above the arched doors or windows) where objects of interests were placed as decorative pieces. Small niches (*ālā*) meant for oil lamps are splendidly carved and jewelled with a peacock crested *rāvatī* (Plate 34). Separate lamp-stand in stone was carved out in the wall (Plate 15). The whole structure rose on the *surangdār* pillars and *bangaliadār*-arches. The courtyard had always remained small and enclosed by high walls as a protection against the dust laden laden whirlwinds. The top-roof or the upper-most terrace has stone parapets formed by *valī* (horizontal bars) and *mudī* (standing shafts) as shown in Plate 13.

These *patuā-havelīs* are provided with about sixty-six *jharokhās*(Plates 13 and 14). In the first and second floors, they are fitted with wooden doors. The cradle-windows were once a scene of chattering ladies basking in the late winter-sun, and sitting idly in summer to enjoy the evening breeze. Beautiful trellises embellished with such care and attention are objects of admiration (Plate 32). Patua Guman Chand did build wonderful artistic *havelī* indeed.[1]

Salim Singh's Havelī

Another architectural pearl conceived by Salim Singh in about A.D. 1815, a decade after that of the Patua, stands in a singularly different way on a raised platform amidst a cluster of houses, down the fort on the eastern slope. A monolithic stone-elephant set on the platform indicates perhaps that this *havelī* should have been that of a *diwan*, since flanking the main gate with strolling elephant was the practice in Jaisalmer. The lower part of the *havelī*, is of little interest. Looking up the visitor beholds the panormic view of a ship-like construction (Plate 21). It is, perhaps, for this reason it is called Jahaz-mahal (ship-palace). Although Salim is depicted as a rebel and cruel in his actions he was certainly a man of artistic taste.[1] Salim Singh, it seems, failed in his attempts to win the confidence of the Mahārāwal, and hence in order to embrass the position of Mahārāwal and to heighten his own position personality to win over the *pāsvāns*, namely Siru and Kastura[2] he erected a honey-comb like constructions of *bārīs* and *bagaliās* on a towering padestal.

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[1] H.S. Sharma, "Some aspects of opium Trade of Rajputana", *Rajasthan History Congress Proceedings, Jodhpur Session*, (Jodhpur, 1963), p. 175.

Jahaznuma—hanging apartment has been named Motimahal (pearl-palace).[3] It is on the fifth tier with two more over it, which were named as Kanchmahal and Rangmahal respectively. It is said that glass-mosaics and colour decoration were the particular attractions which made these storeys most famous, but some years back, these tumbled down.[4] The extant upper-most appartment, the Motimahal, has thirty-eight *bagaliās* spread on all the four aisles, twelve each on the longer and seven each on the shorter sides. In between the *noks* of the balcony-arches, frontal dancing-peacock, have been inserted as a common decorative motif. And the space in between the pillars at their basal height has been filled in by dexterously perforated *takiās*. The linings in the *jāngadī* (Bartizan) have been beautifully shown decorated with *sehrā-bandī* of *lūms* (knobs). The outer walls of Motimahal are richly decorated with a spread of *belī* and *basant* (romantic floral-decorations). Inside this chamber, carvings and sensous colour decorations run along in the dado and as borders in the niches. Once miniature paintings were set with the *chūnam* frames to lend an extra charm to this pearl-palace.[5] Salim Singh died in 1827 as a result of drinking a poisoned cup of beverage served by his wife. Whatever might have been his political action. the Jahazmahal

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1. Mahta Ummed Singh, Tavarikh—*Tāwri Mahtā Mahājanā kai khāndān kī* (Allahabad, V.S. 1982), p. 88.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
4. *Ibid.*, But Adams has observed six storeyes in this complex, and it is also said that Tod under the influence of the Patuas brandished Salim as a man without heart. Adams describes the house of Salim in the following words : "The house of the notorious Dewan Salim Singh, who devastated the country nearly a hundred years ago with his extortion and cruelity is magnificiently carved and towers above the rest of the city; it is a very grand edifice of six storeys of cut stone with cupolas and much ornamentation, especially on the top storey". *Cf. The Western Rajputana States*, 2nd ed., (London, 1900), p. 88.
5. *Ibid.*

bearing a unique *bagaliadār* architecture is monument for his artistic sense.

Diwan Nathmal's Havelī

There is yet another notable *havelī* of Diwan Nathmal, contemporaneously built with Badalvilas, in the early '80s of the nineteenth century. It is a fine edifice completed in 1885, which is said to have been gifted to Diwan by Mahārāwal Bairisal.[1] It is borne out by an Urdu inscription on the stone-tablet, which reads :

> '*Bel bū̱nte phū̱l phal gulshan se gul kyāri huī* |
> *Dāyen bāyen Hathi, Lalu arj kī bakhshīsh Bairisaljī imārat banāī hai*' ||

The plan of the first floor is quite interesting. The facade of this floor is handsomely carved and beautifully designed with the smack of traditional trellises and bays. *Havelīs* of the Diwans have always been flanked by elephants; here also we see the same (Plate 26). One noteworthy feature is that decorated eaves on the front face, upon which a series of motifs viz. steam-engines, cycles, soldiers, caparisoned horses, elephants and birds in stone are carved. The entire plan of this *haveli* was devised by two chief architects, Hathi and Lalu as referred to in the aforesaid inscription. The facade apparently displays the strict formal balance but on close observation it is found that one half is not exact imitation of the other half in the design of windows and projections. The front is formed by seven *pātū-pān* (golden lustered) stones in which two projected *kanwals*, four sets of decorated *bārīs* and one magnificient central *jharokhā* flanked by one mini *kanwal* and one *bārī* on either side. This rare ensemble is quite ornate and typical, which enhances the beauty of this *havelī*. In this *havelī*, figures of *Chopdar* and *Chhadidar* (two cadres of attendents) are to be seen out on either side of the main door of the *mol*. Two *bagaliās* (cupolas) on either side of the main enterence gate of the *havelī* stand out singularly, having been

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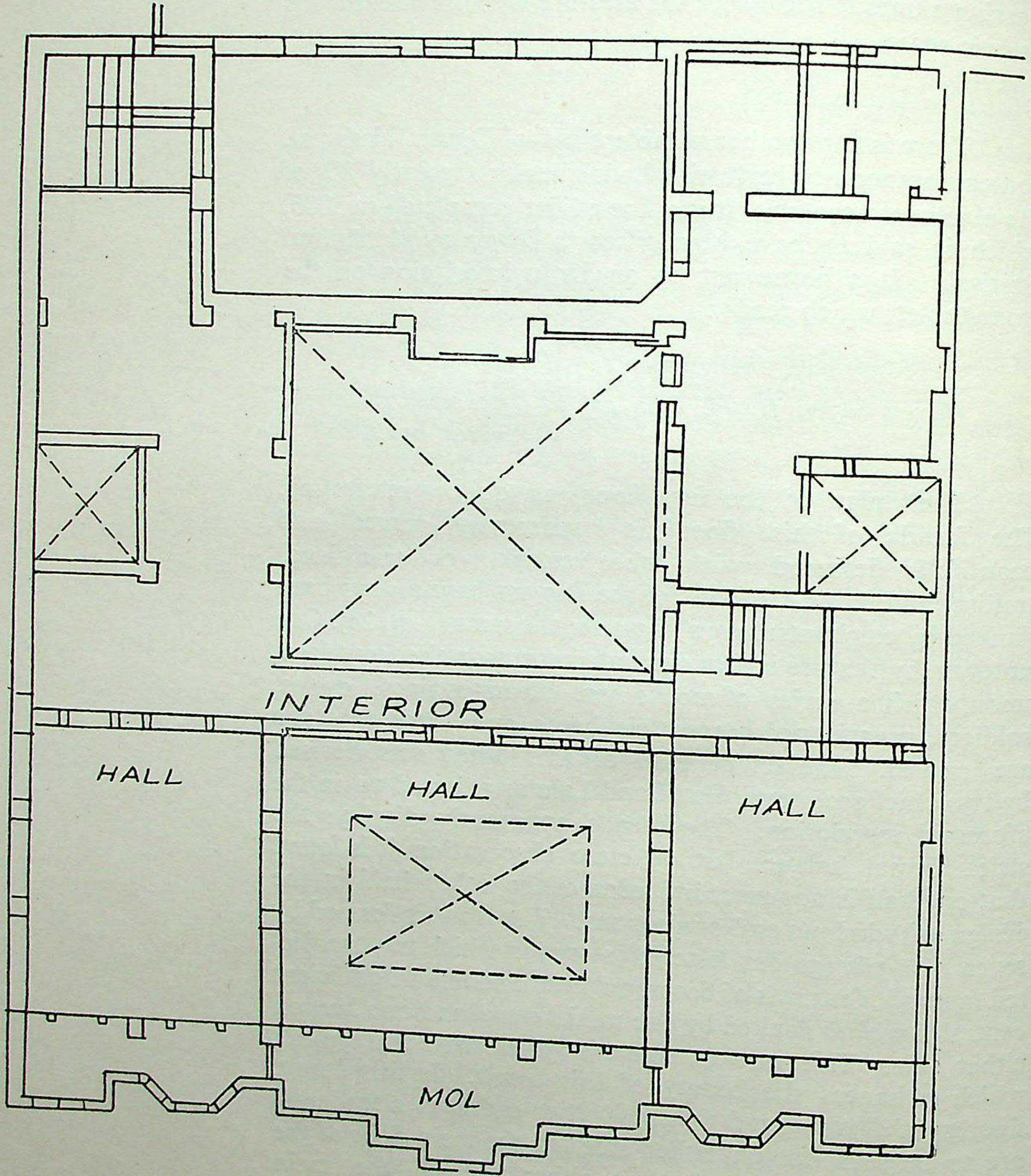
[1] "Nath Mal, the late Dewan, during his time of office, built himself a fine house, on the front of which beautiful carving is displayed"; Adams, *op. cit.*


INTERIOR
HALL
HALL
HALL
MOL

FIRST FLOOR
PLAN OF THE DIWAN NATHMAL'S HAVELI

chisselled out of one stone-slab on the orders of Diwan Sahib for the Paliwal Chiefs in Baph *tehsil* of the erstwhile Jaisalmer State to enshrine images of Bhabhuta Siddha and Swami Darinath. These have not been taken charge of the chiefs as per conditions, and they are there even to this day, standing as part of this ornate house.

This five storeyed edifice presents a kaleidiscopic view through the archway (Plate 26). The *mol* of *havelī* is decorated with some beautiful murals and miniatures as well.

Houses

Jaisalmer is principally a city of winding alleys with ancient houses with ornate fronts. Every house has its enterance-door flanked by wooden horse-head from the lintel-ends. The *agavādā* of the *mol* is embellished with exuberant trellis-work with *belī* and *basant*, *tārāphūl*, *kharliā*, *chhayās*, *athās*, *sūrajmukhī*-roundals, *lūms*, etc. *Jharokhās*, *gokhadās*, *bārīs* and such other architectural features on the front make the houses bewitchingly beautiful (Plates 27 to 29).[1]

They are so planned and designed that dust and heat does not disturb living. Yellow-ochre coloured stone floors glitter in bright sun light. *Pathiyāl* and *medī* are comperatively cooler than the front ones (*modā* and *mol*). Asera Bhavan on the Gadsisar street, Ranvir Singh *mol* in Chauganpara and a few houses in Kundapara, Sundarpara, Vyasmohalla and Patario-ki-gali are models bewitching the onlooker. The fretted *jhūlan-jharokhā* are the fittest place to enjoy the evening breeze and to spend one's time chatting with lovely women. A couplet aptly describes the mood of the people leisurely spending their time :

Galiyo sir gaddal bichhe,

Amal bate apramān |

Mahal changī drav mānsā

Samajhtiyā Jaisān ||

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[1] Jaisalmer Gazel, vv. 1-7; G.N. Sharma, *Social Life in Medieval Rajasthan* (Agra, 1968), p. 49.

"In the projected balconies bed-rolls are spread, one can share opium without discrimination. Prosperous people live in beautiful houses, such is the city of Jaisalmer with beauty and taste".

Buildings also grew around the tanks, the meeting places for the *panihārins* cracking jokes and to feel free from the day's hard work. It had been, till recently, a spot for *mehfils* (dine and dance parties). Gadsi-parol stands majestically overlooking the silvery sheet of water (Plate 30). Other similar spots are the Mulsagar, Amarsagar and Barabag (Plate 31), which all enthrall the visitor.

Stone-Carvings

Constructions in Jaisalmer is of gold-buff sandstone, and the city is famous for the richness of its stone and wood carvings and ornamentation on house-fronts, palaces and temples, exhibiting a plethora of floral patterns intermingled with leaves and innumerable geometric motifs.[1] Intricate carvings on the fronts of *havelis* do give an conjested appearance. Really the defty fingers of the carvers have chiselled out the stone here as finely as walnut-carvings of Kashmir.[2] The spicy and creative precision found in the *jālīs* bring a nuance in the drab environs of the city and in its landscape; the spectator enjoys the sight of epiphanies of conglomerated geometric and floral patterns in stone.[3]

Carvers who wrought a wreath of lace-like ornamentation especially on the fronts of the houses and *havelīs* followed the age-old tradition of stone-carving handed down to them through centuries by their forefathers. Some early examples of Indian lattice work can be seen in the Kailasa at Ellora, Belur temple in, and in the old Chalukayan shrine at Pattadakal in Karnataka state.[4] However, Silpa-Sastras and Sanskrit literature give ample examples to this art. In the Mughal period, the art of stone-setting, carving

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1. Enakshi Bhavnani, *Decorative Designs and Craftsmanship of India*, (Bombay, 1974), p. 11.
2. Mulk Raj Anand, "On the origins of the Descendants of the sun", *Marg*, Vol. XII (March 1959), no. 2, p. 10.
3. Surendra Kalia, "Stone", *Marg*, Vol. XVIII (December, 1964), no. 1, p. 41.
4. Enakshi Bhavnani, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

and inlay-work developed as a singular art-profession; examples which arrest our attention coming not only from northern India, but also from Gujarat and Deccan as well.[1] This aspect of Mughal-art reached Jaisalmer with all its fragrance sometime in early sixteenth century. Outside influence through traders had its impact here also (Plate 17).

Majestic frontage of houses generally bear an immense variety of *jalīs*, but not exactly in the sense of perforated screens. Designs are so etched that their deep cutting create an impression of their being cut in a peep-hole manner, but the stone on its rear has a plain surface. Likewise, the foliated scroll designs in the stone-panels are so profusely carved that the work is mistaken for stucco mouldings. Another important feature in this regard is that this exuberance of ornamentation has been restricted to the frontages; so ingenuously carved that the onlooker is dazed at the immensity and intricacy of the carvings. A very close observation in the fretted foliages and geometric patterns shows that countable units and motifs have been inserted in a way as to lend an impression of an endless network of lace-like filigree work (Plates 14 and 29). Stylisation and repetition, perhaps being qualities in such an ornamental work, seem to dominate (Plates 39 and 32), baffling all possibilities of working out chronological development in motifs. This vast array of intricate ornamentation can be categorised as :

(1) Geometrical patterns
(2) Foliated-scrolls
(3) Bird-motifs.

These traceries most tastefully decorate the oriel windows, balconies and *bārīs*.

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[1] "It (arabesque-decoration) occurs throughout the Islamic world in countless variations, so that it is impossible to classify the various forms according to a chronological order or according to national or dynastic predilections. Persian, Turkish and Indian artists understood the language of arabesque quite as well as Arabic speaking artists, and through the centuries they computed one against the other in creating ever more varieties and combinations"; E. Kuhnel, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. I (1960 ed.), p. 561; also R. Nath, *Decorative Art in Mughal Architecture* (Delhi-Varanasi-Patna, 1976), p. 55.

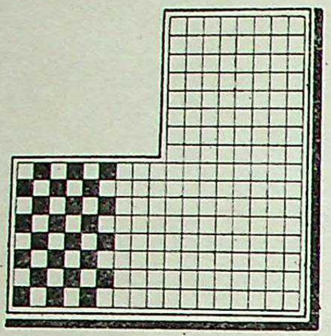

Fig. 1

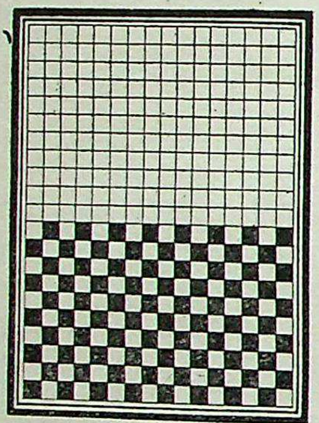

Fig. 2

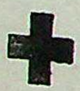

Fig. 3

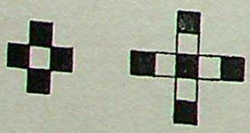

Fig. 4

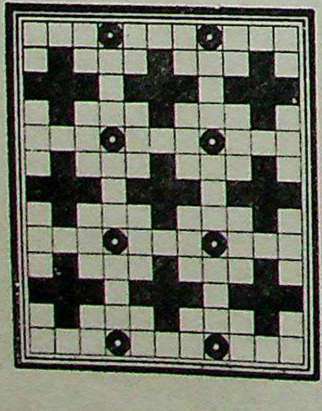

Fig. 5

Geometrical Patterns

Geometrical patterns are peredominant among the decorative motifs. Pattern is, as art-critics define, the spontaneous outgrowth of repeating the same unit by tracing. Technically a pattern is formed by plaiting, netting, or weaving or any of the process employed in setting the unit through ordered repetition in a defined space. Broadly speaking, pattern does not mean only the recurrence of similar forms but also their recurrence at regular intervals. The artist's hand is directed by a fancy of a fertile brain to obtain a plethora of settings out of a numbered motifs. It is as an aesthetic experience. Both the strength and creativity of the pattern is based on the basic designs or motifs like a square, hexagon, octagon, etc. The basic unit of the pattern is set at the bottom, across, or diagonal to form the final pattern. At times open-petalled flowers are inserted in between at regular intervals to make it more meaningful and more pulsating. The artists of Jaisalmer are no exception in this regard and following are the specific examples :

(a) Group of checkers (*chaublās*)—Diaper or chessboard pattern is not a recent pattern, but a very old motif derived from the primitive basket-weavers. The dark portion in the stone (fig. 1) is achieved by carving deeply the alternate diaper in the panel. This simple unit of square can be utilized in innumerable ways. The illustrated pattern is very commonly used particularly as borders to the floral-panels, balconies and doorways (Plates 34 and 42). Fig. 2 is similar to fig. 1, but with a group of more squares joined diagonally. This method has been displayed more in *takiyā* panels (Plates 27 and 29). Patterns illustrated in figs. 3 and 4 are a combination of a group of five or nine squares. Fig. 3 is a combination in which the central square has been chiselled, whereas in the fig. 4 it is not.

As already observed that the carvers not only worked on stone but also on wood and sometimes on iron sheet as well. Fig. 5 portrays a good example of a skilled perforated *jālī* on iron sheet (Plate 5). Here, the motif of five squares has been laid on a big panel at a regular intervals of one diaper, both down and crosswise, in which the positive twelve white squares are marked dintinctly, whereas the 13th central square is marked by an addition of a small round. This interesting example with little variation is seen in Lodurva temple-fencing (Plate 39). Fig. 6 illustrates the arrangements of diapers diagonally or slanting with a crossing at every interval. This design of upturned quadrangle is formed by an assembalage of twenty-four mini-squares in which thirteen squares go for the brighter one and the rest eleven for the dark. This motif is named as Arab-diapers in Western world because of its recurrent usage in architectural decoration in the Arab world. In Jaisalmer, however, it is known *chaublā chaubīn*. This diaper decoration seems to be the basis for the geometrical ornamentation in all countries and in all ages. It can be seen on the pottery of the Indus civilisation and at the same time in the *OP ART* of this century.

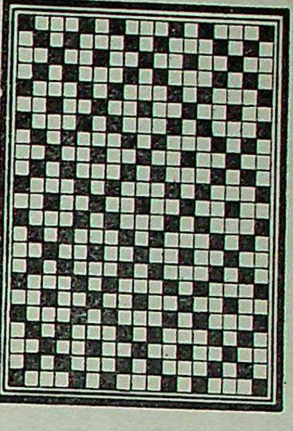

Fig. 6

(b) GROUP OF HEXAGONS (*chhayās*)—Trigons are conceived by passing a diagonal line through the squares. It is a very significant departure from the previous setting. The triangular halves are joined into beautiful settings. The halves of the diamonds are equilateral triangles. A pattern made of diamonds decorated with *chaufuliā* on the crossings or in the centre of each diamond as shown in figs. 7 and 8 is known as *gaj-chauras* with *chaufuliās* (Plates 29, 36 and 37). This design has been very much favoured by the people and carvers of Jaisalmer. Again, as a further development, a lattice of diagonals and verticals are worked out to display the *gaj-chhayā* pattern, in which the equilateral hexagon is set upright (fig. 9). This scheme of hexagon is relieved by an insertion of a six petalled floral motif, and also by a six pointed star in each box (Plates 29 and 33).

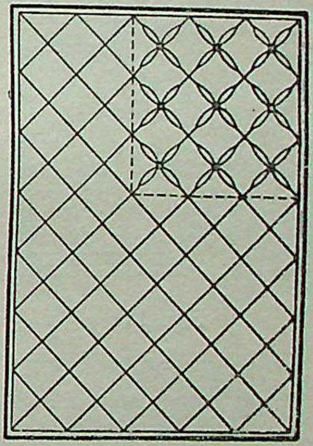

Fig. 7

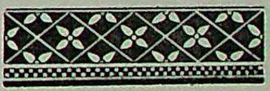

Fig. 8

Pattern shown in fig. 10, is a variation where the hexagons are formed horizontal lines instead of verticals as in the earlier one. In this example radiating triangles to convert the hexagon into star are oblitrated. The same pattern of hexagon is translated into a six pointed star (fig. 11 and Plate 39). This pattern is formed by a grouping of six small upright hexagons. The star bearing an outstretched flower inside becomes more interesting (Plate 32), but now the star is not surrounded by a group of hexagons; instead is within a big hexagon (fig. 12). This star, with additional props occurs as a decorative motif for ventilation or peep holes in the wall.

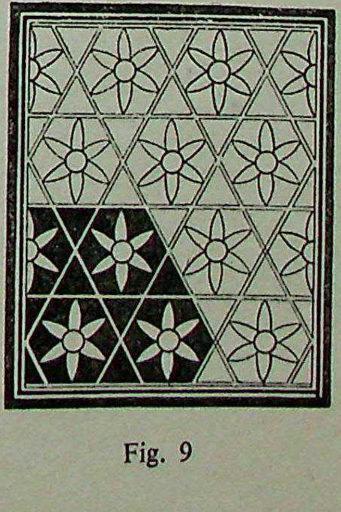

Fig. 9

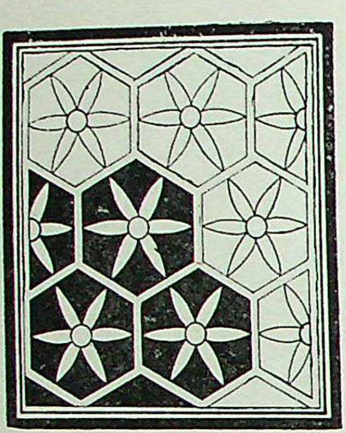

Fig. 10

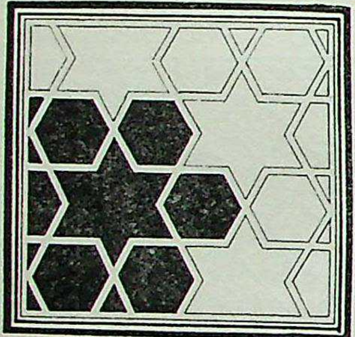

Fig. 11

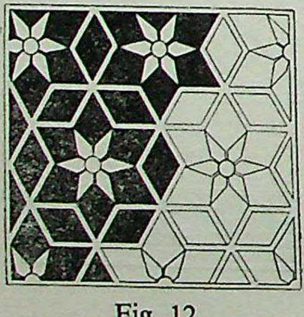

Fig. 12

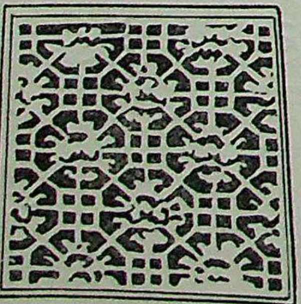

Fig. 13

(c) Group of octagons (*athās*)—This geometric form is not in itself a complete unit, but a repeatation of basic units. Intersection or turnover of the octagonal unit, so formed decorate the whole pattern. The first variety is formed by joining octagons with each other in such a way that a square-diaper is formed by the group of four as illustrated in fig. 13. This set becomes more interesting by adding a cross in each diaper and a blossomed flower is inserted in every octagon. This setting is known as *gul-athās* among *chhīpās* (carvers). A variant setting is where octagons intersect each other on either side forming *kharaliās* on horizontal and vertical faces. No square diaper is obtained but *gajs* are worked out down and crosswise passing through the centre of each octagon (fig. 14). This pattern is known as *gaj-athās*. In another variety (fig. 15) *gaj* is interpolated with star-shaped diaper in the exact centre of each octagon (Plate 39). These two are of course identical but for its intersection in the latter which is called in local language as *bhavrā-athās*. Yet, in another instance, a complicated octagon-lattice is obtained with the use of four sets of of mortars (*Kharlia*-forms) in multiplied '×' design as in fig. 16. As *kharliā* is a source to this ingenious frame, it is called *kharliā-athās* (Plate 28). When this group of four crossed-*kharliās* is set in plus-wise form (+), an eight pointed star is formed in the inner space as illustrated in fig. 17. Sometimes these patterns form a mesh in the panel that making it difficult to distinguish the basic geometric designs.

(d) Group of arc-repeats (*khatarvās*)—Segments of circles provide a host of possibilities of combination, particularly in the 'scale-pattern'. The most popular and easiest one is a 'wave-pattern' (*lahariyā*). This pattern is evolved by weaving a line of semi-circles one upon another. As a matter of fact it may be called as 'fish-scale' or the 'plumage-pattern'. Plate 32 shows its growing popularity (fig. 18). It is built on a diamond lattice, in which each box is superimposed by an arc drawn inside. Another possibility is that arc goes round the diaper, and a line of pile of segments is formed on uprights but not step-wise as shown in fig. 19. Another fine variation is the vertical seperating dotted-line which goes down from the apex to base (Plate 23). In fact by such crossings a 'trefoil' segment-shape emerges resembling the donkey's hoof and, perhaps, for this affinity it is popularly called a *khatarvā* or *gadākhurī*. If the same design is woven on the ornamented net of diamonds as in fig. 20, it is called *khatarvā-chaufulī*. This is a very common pattern used in the decoration of houses and temples. One more pattern practised at Jaisalmer is known as *badrang*. This variety is completely different from *khatarvās*, and is constructed from the arcs by weaving them as brackets (fig. 21), and yet another pattern of the same is woven by putting *chaufuliā* within arcs as shown in fig. 22.

These are a few varieties of geometric patterns preferred by *chhīpās*, architects, and by the common man alike, interwovan in the a *jālis* displaying a myriad variety.

Foliated-Scrolls

Plant-life in every style has been more or less used continuously in patterns, through the ages till today. I observed in the architectural decorations of the Jaisal city, leaves, sprigs and flowers have been generally used in patterns, either singly or in combination. These rendered with a little exaggeration and restriction of space available conform to the rules of rhythm and symmetry.

At Jaisalmer, ornamental spread of Roman type leaf-pattern locally known here as *champā* among *salāvates* (carvers) and *chhīpās* seems to have been preferred. Perhaps it may be because of its beautiful form resting in the roundings of the lobes of leaves terminating at spines. Its frequent and varied application is adopted here only for its ornamental possibilities. Sometimes an interesting 'wavy-pattern' is woven in spandrels or in the niche-panels. Notable features are that flowers and buds are eliminated from the foliated scrolls; instead only sprouts, tendrils and twigs with leaves are inserted in the designs. Occasionally a *chaufuliā* in the centre is used when the turn-round of the 'repeat' is worked out (Plate 41) and very rarely with *sūrajmukhī-īndī* (sun-flower shaped motif). This foliated-scroll pattern is locally named as *vasant* (the spring) for in this season twigs and leaves sprout profusely. At many places this set of curves and curvy leaves meander in the panels as to give a grille-like linear effect

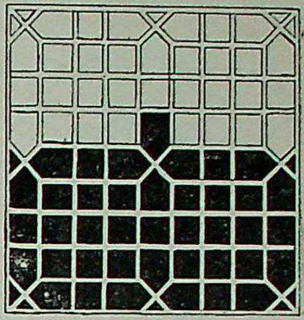
Fig. 14

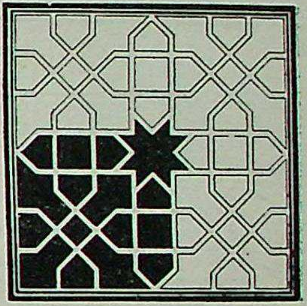
Fig. 15

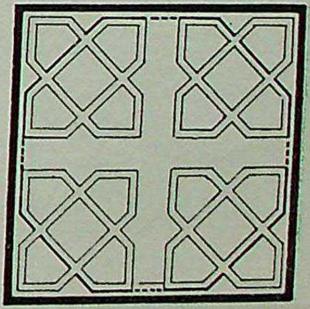
Fig. 16

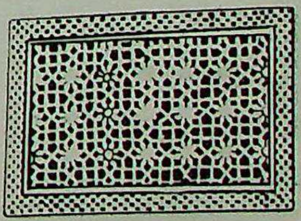
Fig. 17

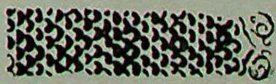
Fig. 18

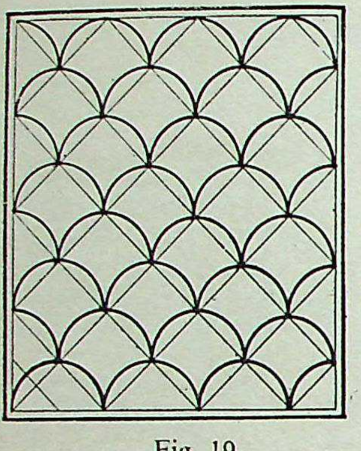
Fig. 19

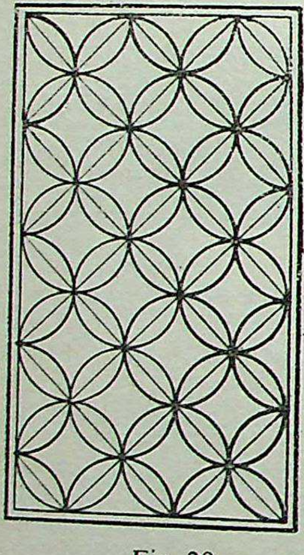
Fig. 20

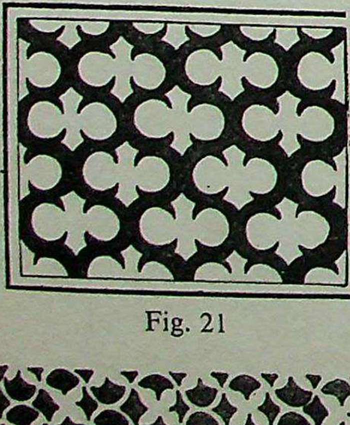
Fig. 21

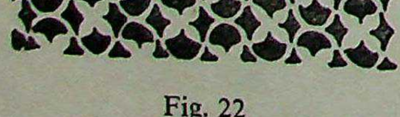
Fig. 22

(Plate 43), and at many places resemble plaster-mouldings (Plate 44). Also, very artistically the thick and long meandering leaves are rendered as a boquet of flowers.

The same leaf *champā* is turned alternately in a clockwise and anti-clockwise fashion to give a pattern shown as in fig. 23. This pattern is made as *munariā-bel*. Here, in the decorative renderings of the Jaisalmer art, a number of other creeper-decoratives are conceived to fill in the long upright recesses. Rosettes (fig. 24), *chaufuliās* (fig. 25) and *Kāngarās*, both *sulat* (upward) and *ulat* (downward) are among the most popular motifs often decorating the marginal recesses (fig. 26). These are significantly unique designs which add charm and aesthetic pause in the decoration and ornamentation of the facades.

Besides, a number of other devises were worked to reach the apex of the decor viz., row of terminating pendants or imposing hanging pendant-knobs (Plates 14 and 28). *Lūm*-decoration which resembles the nuptial chaplets is called locally as *sehrābandī* (Plates 16 and 19).

Bird-motifs

The motifs and designs of plant-life used in various arts and crafts become more enchanting and lively with the insertion of preening and chirping birds. And the patterns become more romantic if the choice is for birds for colourful majesty viz. peacocks and parrots in their gay moods. Delineations of peacocks in their spreadout plumage (fig. 27) and preening parrots (fig. 28) break not only the monotony of the repetition of motifs of the carvings either on stone or wood but also impart a supreme sense of sylvan surroundings. The appear beautiful taking their pride positions in between the spaces of shade-linings in the balcony-arches. Figs. 27 and 28 display some of their idealised renderings in various positions to banish the drabness in the Jaisalmer landscape (Plates 20, 21, 23, 46, 47 to 49).

Wood-Carvings

The creative design of the stone workers of Jaisalmer, particularly their trellis patterns is unparalled and superb. But then wood work here is in no way inferior to that of stone inspite of the fact that only a few specimens of wooden carvings have so far come to my notice. The woodwork is found only in the *havelīs* but not in Rajmahals (Plates 47 to 57).

As regards the motifs and quality of carvings, doors of the Patua's fascinate the visitor. Doors and door-frames bear foliated creeper (*belī*) or leaf-tendrils (*patra-śākhā*) or chevrons (*lahariās*) as pleasant decorations. Generally the doors are divided into over a dozen small rectangles or squares forming bays in the door leaves. In those spaces floral motifs are carved impressively. The bands of floral motifs in a variety of way-meander pleasantly in the company of preening peacocks or sometimes with the lovely parrots (Plates 47 and 49). Nowhere has this motif of sporting peacocks received such great favour (Plate 48) as in the wood-carvings of this city. Brass bell-knobs and buttoned nails have been inserted in the joints forming the bay as also in the centre of the paṇels to add strength and beauty. Salim Singh's *havelī* also is similarly decorated.

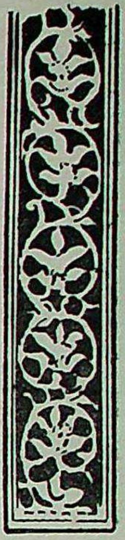

Fig. 23

After a gap of about a hundred years, we again see the work of wood carving in the *mol* of Diwan Nath Mal's *havelī*. Although a larger variety of floral and faunal motifs are to be found in this *haveli*, the workmanship is inferior (Plates 52 to 54). Human and faunal forms represented in the door and window panels of this *havelī* (Plates 55 and 56) lack sense of modelling and design.

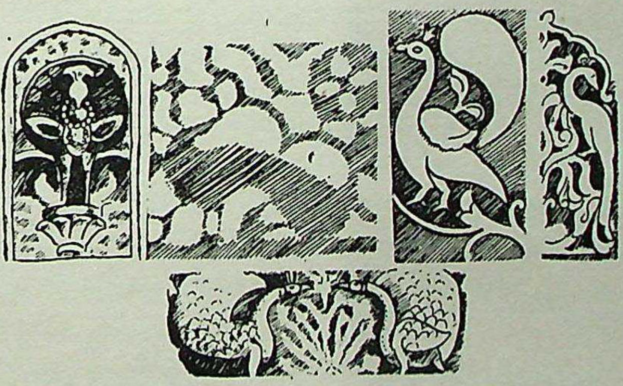

Fig. 27

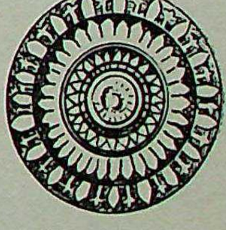

Fig. 24

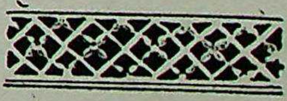

Fig. 25

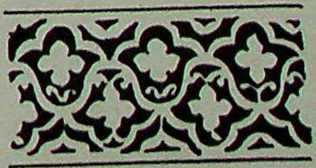

Fig. 26

Another worth noting feature in the wood work is *todiyā*-horses flanking the door-lintel of the main enterance gate in each and every house of the city, in the carving of which the volume and shape has been rendered nicely and naturally. This motif appears to have been adopted from Solanki-Vaghela art tradition of Gujarat.[1]

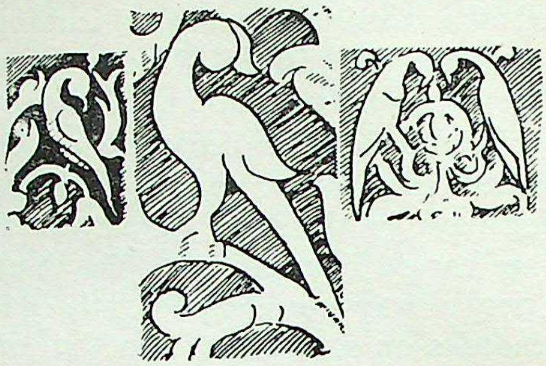

Fig. 28

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[1] H. Goetz, *The Art and Architecture of Bikaner State* (Oxford, 1950), p. 93.

CHAPTER IV

SCULPTURAL ETHOS

Jaisalmer has been the principal centre of Jaina faith since its beginning. Religious and cultural prosperity of the city has prospered uninterupted with the rising power of the migrated Oswal Jains. Now a huge number of Jaina devotees and tourists throng to Jaisalmer and lose themselves in the beauty of the serene sculptures. These sculptures though lacking the finish of Chalukayan art, yet in imagination and variety they are excellent. This was the period when ornate designing and planning of temples took place in the western Indian region. Jaisalmer particularly received all these impacts fully as it falls into that religious belt.

It is astonishing to note that Hindu temples in Jaisalmer are not more and lack architectural efflorescence inspite of the fact that all the Mahārāwals were followers of the Brahmanical faith. On the other hand Jaina places of worship predominate. The antiquity and historicity of the Jaina Pantheon and art is masked in obscurity. Out of twenty-four *Tirthankaras*,[1] the last three, Neminatha, Parsvanatha and Mahavira, are accepted as historical figures in the light of the tangible archaeological evidences.

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[1] The following is the list of 24 Tirthankaras alongwith their cognizances in bracket :

(i) Rishabha (*Vrisha*), (ii) Ajita (*Gaja*), (iii) Sambhava (*Asva*), (iv) Abhinandan (*Kapi*), (v) Sumati (*Krauncha*), (vi) Padamprabha (*Raktabeeja*), (vii) Suparsva (*Swastika*), (viii) Chandraprābha (*Shashi*), (ix) Suvidha (*Makara*), (x) Shital (*Shrivatsā*), (xi) Shreyamsha (*Gandak*), (xii) Vrsupujya (*Mahisha*), (xiii) Vimal (*Shuker*), (xiv) Ananta (*Syena*), (xv) Dharma (*Vajra*), (xvi) Shanti (*Mnga*), (xvii) Kunthu (*Chhaga*), (xviii) Ara (*Nandyavarta*), (xix) Malli (*Ghata*), (xx) Muni (*Kurma*), (xxi) Suvrat (*Nilotpala*), (xxii) Nami (*Samkha*), (xxiii) Parsva (*Serpant*) and (xxiv) Mahavir (*Simha*).

Tirthankara Idols

The cluster of Jaina temples in the fort are the temples of Parsvanatha, Sambhavanatha, Shitalanatha, Shantinatha, Kunthunatha, Chandraprabhu, Rishabhadeva and Mahavira. One more notable temple at Lodurva is dedicated to Parsvanatha. All these temples are replete with artistic sculptures *Garbhagrihas* (sanctum sanctorum) are enshrined with respective *Tirthankara* idols along with a hoard of other metal images. The popular saying in Jains is that "reach Jaisalmer and see the varied images of the Lords" (*Jaisalmer Juhariye*, *Arihanta bimba aneka*). The idol of Parsvanatha (said to be of 11th century A.D.) presently housed in the fort-temple is the oldest known piece among the stone images (Plate 58). It had once been the principal diety at Lodurva temple but, later, for the sake of safety it was brought to Jaisalmer and installed in the fort-temple. Again, in the early 17th century, when the Lodurva temple was renovated another idol of Parsvanatha (Plate 59), said to have been carved and brought by a Patan artist-carver, which differs in its form and *parikara* (decorative frame) design was installed. This later image is in indigo-black while the former seems to have been painted over in some greyish white;[1] the hoods are still black. The back one has a canopy of myriad hoods, while that in Jaisalmer has a seven-hooded cobra canopy, though both images are seated in the conventional cross legged *yogīc*-pose. Both the decorative panels of *pātalī-gādī* consist commonly a goddess in *sukhāsanā* pose flanked by *chāmardhāranī* (female fly-whisk-bearers). The composition of the figures are well balanced with figures of twisted trunked elephant and lion with upturned tail, *Gajamukh-yaksha* to the right and *yakshini* on left corner besides other minor decorative figures. But the shaft of the *parikara* of the earlier image is formed by standing Indradeva on either side, while the Lodurva image has some other additional secondary dieties. The latter's typanum is supported by two tiered horizontal bars while that of the former is one tiered, in which *gandharvas* and dieties in *sukhāsanā* and in flying postures are seen. The typanum in both, like pedestal panel bears a close resemblance, in

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1. Cf. *Sveta rakta asita mitra pārāvatasamaprabhā | Mugakapotadmabha manjiṣṭhā haritaprabhā||*, Vāsunandi, *Pratishthāsarasangraha* (Sholapur, 1925), 3, 77.

having a carving of elephant on the sides, and *deva* figures flanking the central figure of *gandharva* playing *turahī* (Plate 58) or jingling cymbals (Plate 59). The carving and deep cutting of the former fascinates the devotee while the Lodurva one is somewhat rigid and flattened. Aesthetically the decorative frame speaks of the importance of the central *Tirthankara* form besides his power and prowess. This inter-space relationship has been a very old practice, which grew in the medieval period as a most ornate device in highlighting the principal diety.

This type of decorative setting with some minor modifications and alterations has been adopted in other images of *Mulanayakas*, but no where double typanum base is sculpted except at Lodurva. The *pātalī-gādī* in the image of Shitalnatha (Plate 61) is unfinished and the whole setting is in a stereotyped relief work on metal sheet. Again, quite distinctly the *parikara* of Rishabhadeva (Plate 64) submerges deep into the niche formed by the decorative front *pātalī* and foliated *toraṇa*, in which Gaumukha —Yaksha also appears. The *toraṇa* shafts are embellished here richly by *Tirthankara* figures in five tiers on either side. This is a highly ornate ensemblage in baroque exuberance. Plates 60, 63 and 65, respectively of Sambhavanatha, Chandraprabhuji and Mahavira display almost the same setting but that of Shantinathji (Plate 62) is in sharp contrast to others as this is in metal and *parikara* idiom is designed in *panchathrthi* fashion in which *Mulanayaka* is flanked by Kausagga image instead of Indra and on the tier above has *yogīc* postured *jina* image on either side thus totalling to a five *jina*-image complex including the chief one besides other usual decorations.

There are many other *Tirthankara* images in metal and stone at Lodurva and Jaisalmer but none could score artistic and iconographic merits than the preceeding examples. Two sumptuously chiselled portals one at Parsvanatha temple of Jaisalmer fort, and the other one at Lodurva are worth noting. Their *toraṇas* are richly bedecked with conopied Parsvanatha images, in the meandering spaces. The Jaisalmer *toraṇa* has an imposing Parsvanatha *bimba* in the central panel with the stylised *parikara*, and, the same is flanked by *parikara* studded Parsvanatha settings, the whole composition of three is well-decorated by *Yakshinī* on either side.

The *toraṇa's* top meandering *velī* and the front *pātalī* are decorded with linear sculptural reliefs representing a host of dancers and musicians in a festive mood. The complete portal is profusely laden with spirited human forms, which are well delineated more by poses and postures of the body than by facial expressions, but the dignified austere appearance of Parsvanatha cannot escape notice. The portal at Lodurva resembles the aforesaid design and planning except for the spirited celestial dancers, etc. They are also decorated at the rear with the same subject and composition. A Rajasthani inscription of 1166 refers to such shrines as '*Uttunga-toraṇa-prāsāda*'. *Jina-bimbas* are carved in *janghā* recesses of Sambhavanatha and Ashtapada temples (Plates 73 and 74). In the domical ceiling of the Sambhavanatha temple, attractive *jina* sculptures are carved magnificiently.

Adopted Hindu Dieties

Jaina religion being very rigid and puritan in the early times other manifestations could not be portrayed liberally, but in later times, under the direct impact of Brahamanism and the spell of Hindu art, a number of dieties and secondary divinitees invigorated the sculptural treasure. It is to be noted here that, unlike Tantrik Buddhism, Jaina priests were influenced by Brahmanical Hinduism and thereby included many of Brahmanical images in their pantheon. Amongst the *devīs*, *Yakshinis* and *Vidyadevis*; and among the *Yakshas*, *Sasandevatas* and *Siva* forms were sculptured. Besides, celestial dancers and musicians, *mithuna* and *apasarā* figures add singular charm and beauty to the temples.

On a close study, it is abserved that the divinities are rendered with ethereal beauty. And, also, these beautiful full-breasted youthful figures and their rhythmic delineations lure the onlooker. They are infact the idealized figures with a baroque tendency. *Yakshas* and their spouses get a very important position in the Jaina pantheon. These demigods appeared as distinctive attendants of the *Tirthankaras*.[1] These, in the later periods, received greater veneration among the Jainas. They occupied a previlaged space in *parikaras*, and also decorated the *maṇḍovara* walls individually in close company of their spouses or consorts. These beautiful

[1] Cf. '*Yaksha bhaktidakshāstīrthakratāmime*'—*Pravachanasaroddhāra.*

couples in *sukhāsanā* or in *kāyotsarga* poses occour on the temple's *karnapītha* (outer wall of the main temple). Rishabhadeva, Parsvanatha, Shantinatha and Kunthunatha temples evidence these beauties. Uma-Maheshvara, *Yaksha-Yakshini*, Kshetrapala-Mahakali, Ishvar Yaksha-Manavi and Indra with his consort (Plates 73, 74, 75, and 76) are artistic masterly strokes bringing out curves and compositions. *Yaksha* (Plate 74) is shown fondling the breast of his spouse—the spouse in turn clings to her mate. Gajmukh-*Yakshas* appear in the domical ceiling of the Chandraprabhuji temple. Incorporation of *Yakshi* in the art and architecture of temple is mainly due to the wishes of business class which form the major portion of Jaina disciples. *Yakshas* are representations of wealth and welfare and their adoration is but natural by the business class for increasing wealth.[1] Likewise, Shri or Goddess Lakshmi (Plate 77),[2] Mahishasuramardini, Kali and Mahakali (Plate 76) and many others as consorts or individually find an honourable place on the different places of the temples. At quite a number of places four armed celestial dancers and damsels charm the onlooker with their bewitching beauty and spirited pose. In the Parsvanatha and Rishabhadeva temples, Krishna as flute player and lifting of Mount Govardhana is also depicted on the pillars and walls.

Apsarās

The most important feature in the temple decoration is the divine beauties in pleasant moods modelled in the numerous identations, projected or recessed. Voluptous youthful, figures of females are long and slender, doe-eyed, full-breasted, with pursed lips, long angular projected nose, twisted haunches and fully bedecked with ornaments. These figures lack careful modelling and finish. Their sensuous poses and postures recall leisure and revelry and complete care free abandon. These lovely women are shown on portals, pillars, arches, brackets, struts, friezes, *janghās*, ceilings, etc. They are found in varied poses—dancing (Plates 12 and 66), in toilet (Plates 67 and 74), playing games (Plates 66 and 69), or musical instruments (Plates 70, 71 and 72), and in *mithuna* attitudes (Plate 71). A damsel standing

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1. B C. Bhattacharya, *The Jaina Iconography*. (Delhi, 1974), pp. 66 and 67.
2. Cf. '*Pativastram Suvarṇāngīm padmahastām gajānkitām*.

seductively in a corner is depicted with one of her breasts being pecked by a parrot and in another she is shown lascinously, fondling her own breast in a different corner. As in other medieval temples sculptures showing amourous couples making love is also seen in Jaisalmer temples. These amorous figures represent the process where fertility in woman is invoked leading ultimately to progeny, which no religon forbades as their representation is intended to teach this science of love in a sacred and serene way.

There are many more poses and themes of such sculptures spread in every nook and corner including varied *paṭṭas* and corridors—*bimbas*, which bring out fanciful decorations to brighten up the temple walls and *toraṇas*. Inspite of being rendered in a stiff and *baroque* idiom, the youthful *belles* in curvaceous attitudes ravish the eyes of onlooker.

Virālikās

Another very important decoration on *maṇḍovara*, *toraṇas* and pillers is *virālikās* (griffins) generally in the form of elephant, lion, and crocodile-faced figures (Plates 75 and 77). In deep relief on edges of identations one can witness griffins with human head coupled with lion's body and in the same manner another griffin comprising elephant-head, lion's body and lamb's legs makes a curious sculpture. These *virālikās* represent the technical skill and imagination of the carvers. Elephants and rhombic forms on the stepped roof, *śikharas* and *toraṇas* besides those figures studded in *parikaras* speak highly of the decorative art, in which *jina-bimbas* and *apasarās* reach their climax.

Through these chosen specimens, an attempt has been made to reveal the irradiant sculptural treasure preserved from the smallest tiny *Tirthankara* image in Sambhavanatha temple to the gigantic *toraṇa* of Parsvanatha temple interspersed with small and big sized human figurines. Thousands of figures with varied forms and poses are found even today withstanding the ravages of time and the dust-laden winds of this city.

CHAPTER V

PAINTING REPERTOIRE

In the golden city of Jaisalmer, paintings neither came to prominence nor glorified the city. Here paintings remained subsidiary to stone and wood carvings. Now arises a pertinent question. Whether the paintings failed miserably in achieving their deserved name and place ? Whether the painters were not encouraged by royal patrons and hence the art did not thrive ? A straight forward answer would be that the paintings are not of insignificant calibre or of decadent quality but the exuberance of stone carvings geometric, floral and other patterns decorating the fronts of palaces and *havelis*, simply smother the existence of the paintings leaving no room to express the painters skill. Unfortunately the paintings of Jaisalmer have not, been properly studied, assessed and published by any one, excepting for some passing references made by some scholars here and there in their works on Rajasthani Art.[1]

The year 1825 is an important date in the history of Jaisalmer school of paintings so far. In my intensive search I could not find any painting prior to that date. However, the methodical search brought to light several mural and other paintings with local idioms. This leads to the conclusion that there existed a local school of paintings which in course of time went into oblivion. How, when and why this happened is an enigma. It would appear that the predominance of sculptures and carvings dominated the city of such an extent that paintings became insignificant and even vanished. Further the Jinabhadra Suri Gyan Bhandar situated in an underground cell of Shri Sambhavanath temple was the only main source of information for art critics, art historians and they did not perhaps study paintings from the existing structural remains. My study of the paintings, here I could discern local idiom not only in murals but in other paintings and also even in a few manuscripts found in the Gyan Bhandar which made me to arrive at the conclusion that there is definitely a Jaisalmer school of painting akin to that of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Bikaner. The disappearance of the local idiom may be due to Salim Singh's wrath on the public and his cruel deeds which caused many of the artists to migrate to the other parts of Rajasthan and probably to other parts of the country also, leading to decadence in paintings and the local folk even forgot their inheritance; and in course of time people became ignorant of their own paintings and considered them as the Mughal paintings (locally known as *sone kī kalam*). This thing happened because they were confused by the aforesaid reference made in one *tawārikh*[1]. Also, *salāvates* (carvers) left this city during Salim's opposition, but at a later time the local need of the facade-carving was met by the *chhīpās* (previously a printers class) who adopted this carving profession at the behest of Mahta Ajit Singh,[2] but painting was forgotten.

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[1] Ramgopal Vijayvargiya, *Rājasthānī Chitrakalā* (Jaipur, 1953), p. 33; V. N. Chaturvedi and R. P. Patodiya (eds.); Anandī Lal Poddār Smirti Pushpī, Calcutta, 1964, p. 17; Kr. Sangram Singh, "Jaipur's Unique Contribution to Rajasthan", *Vārshikī*, Rajasthan Lalit Kala Akademi, Jaipur, Annual Number, 1963, p. 34.

Murals

The art of mural decoration had been a splendid mode to enliven and beautify a house. Themes were selected to satisfy the house owner. Moreover the Jaina community was not averse to the portrayal of Vaishnava themes. The first known example comes from a *Patuā-havelī*. As referred to earlier, Seth Guman Chand built five *havelīs* for his five sons around A.D. 1800. The *havelī* adjacent to Mahavir Bhawan, is called number five and had been given to Zorawarmal who was a top businessman of his times, and who also assisted Maharana Udaipur in his troubled days.[3] Further, the marriage ceremony of his son, Chandanmal, was performed with much pomp and show in the year 1825.[4] One can surmise that at this time some further renovation and decoration, might have been carried out in some important halls and antechambers of this *havelī*. The hall (*diwānkhānā*) on the first floor of this fifth *havelī* has beautiful murals on *izārā*-wall and in the other hall of the 2nd floor one can see patches of paintings. On the *izārā*-wall in the *diwānkhānā* the painted strip is 45 cms. broad divided into eight large oblongs, each of which consists one big cartouche in the centre and one vertical oval on either side of the big one. The painted surfaces represent subjects, such as *Dānlīlā*, *Todī-rāginī*, battle scene, a court-lady playing with *yo-yo* (*chakaī*), fight between elephants, a damsel holding *vīnā*, a fair and charming female holding a pigeon in her hand, boar-hunt, wrestlers, etc. Paintings of *Todī-rāganī*, *Dānlīlā* and the lady in the company of the bird seem to be very characteristic examples representing some indigenous traits. Pictorially, the scene of boar-hunt is an unique example in the sense that it shows a linear force and a space-organisation which very well expresses the subtlety of the artist's hands. Dark-green, yellowish orange and *hirmichī*-red were the favourite colours employed in these compositions. As these are the earliest known examples, their stylistic study can throw light upon the painting trend in the early ninteenth century and its relation to later painting-specimens.

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[1] Mahta Ummed Singh, *Tawārikh Tāwarī Mahatā Mahājanā Kai Khāndān kī* (Allahabad, V.S. 1982), pp. 86, 87.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 200, 201.

[3] *Vir Vinod*, II, p. 1927.

[4] A.H.E. Boilean, *Personal Narrative of a tour through the western States of Rajwara in 1835*, (Calcutta, 1837), p. 43.

The paintings on the second floor are badly damaged. In the *diwānkānā* of the second *Patuā-havelī*, a few paintings decorate the lower wall (*izārā*). All the paintings on these walls are in a damaged condition and would indicate the apathy and negligence of the people. The painting of Sivaparivara only is in a good shape as it had been rendered in a corner usually hidden and protected when the door is opened. Ganesa, Lakshmi and fighting elephants are some other subjects seen in this hall. The age of the murals here seems almost the same as that of the paintings in fifth *Patuā-havelī*. In this group of paintings, it is observed that stress is more on the linear quality.

In the fort premises murals are found in the Rang-mahal, the upper part of Hawa-parol. As there are no written legend on the paintings, there, is no option left out except to depend upon the technique employed and the study of rendering of the forms in the paintings to reach some conclusion as to their age. Broadly, the style adopted here seems to be of the third quarter of 19th century, that is after a gap of four decades from paintings in *patuās*, as the facial form and other norms appear to incorporate Jaipur and Jodhpur idioms with local accents and the use of blue colour for the sky and the treatment of clouds bear out. This trend is perhaps due to a band of artists from Jaipur who might have come to Jaisalmer *via* Jodhpur in response to an invitation from Mahārāwal, probably Bairisal, who might have commissioned the painters to decorate the Rangmahal with Radha-Krishna toilet-scene, Siva-parivara, dancers and musicians, etc., at the time of his coronation. I came to this conclusion after studying the stylistic reflection in the paintings. Kr. Sangram Singh is also of the same view.[1]

The murals in this apartment include both religious and social themes. Siva-parivara, Ganesa flanked with his devotees, Krishna combing the hair of Radha, Gaucharan, Gangaur and Jaipur Dashera-procession are a few religious subjects. Others include paintings on various subjects such as, boar-hunt, ariel-views of Jodhpur, Bundi and Kota cities, a royal lady holding a babe in her arms and single figure compositions in ovals on the inner cusps representing female dancers and musicians. Faces in the paintings glitter with artistic finish and are in good state. Their size vary form the miniature format of 20×10 cms. to the bigger one of 135×50 cms. The palette is very rich and the colours still look fresh, but on the *izarā*-paintings a coat of varnish is given perhaps with the good intention to protect from possible damage, but instead has affected the paintings adversely spoiling the fineness of the paintings as the varnish streaks are flowing down from the picture-surfaces.

To the same period as those of the Rangmahal may be ascribed the wall paintings on the frieze of the *mandapa* dome of Rishabhnatha temple on the basis of handling of the medium and pigments. Leakage of rain water and spots while white-washing have badly damaged the paintings so much so the subjects have become difficult to distinguish. The marriage-scene of Neminathji and procession scenes are hardly discernible. Lines and forms are folkish and as such no stylistic history can be built up here, but chronologically they definitely go back to a period around 1880. The greybearded chief priest of the temple has also supported my view point. Colours and pigments applied in are *hirmichī*-red and chrome green dark filled-in the pictorial spaces drawn in black.

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[1] "The Jaipur fresco and mural painters were also engaged by different rulers and *thakurs* to decorate their Sheeshmahal and other buildings, their works could be seen in Mewar, Jaisalmer, Ghanerao, Kuchaman and many of the towns of Rajasthan"; Kr. Sangram Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

The mural paintings of Nathmal *havelī* can be dated to around 1885 as the *haveli* was constructed in that year as evidenced from the stone tablet fixed on the main gate. On the immediate back of the front balcony-wall some murals are painted and are still in good condition. As regards the compositional merits, paintings at first sight show the high imaginative quality of the artists, but the rendering and the linear flow are much coarser while the colour scheme is quite pleasing. At first they seem copies of miniatures, but on closer examination it seems the line drawings might have been prepared from the perforated sheets (*charvās*). Contemporary evidence by Shri K.L. Soni of Jaisalmer who narrated how his great grandfather used these *charvās* in preparing the paintings on walls and papers corroborates this. However, I could not see any clue to the use of perforated sheet in the execution of the paintings. Subjects dealt in this *havelī* are *Rasalila*, cows returning in the twilight, toilet scene, curd-churning, a lady in the tryst and fight of elephants, etc. In this part of *mol* a number of miniature paintings are seen framed with *chūnam* lining. Ranvir Singh's house in Chauganpara does also bear some mural fragments in the *mol* showings strains of folk art.

Unlike other centres in Rajasthan, main entrances are not decorated here on either side with pictures of horse or elephant. The continuity of wall-painting tradition is not seen. Regarding techniques employed in the process of preparation of wall-paintings both '*secco*' and *tempera* have been adopted as in the Marwar murals.[1] *Tempera* has commonly been followed here by the painters, pleasantly

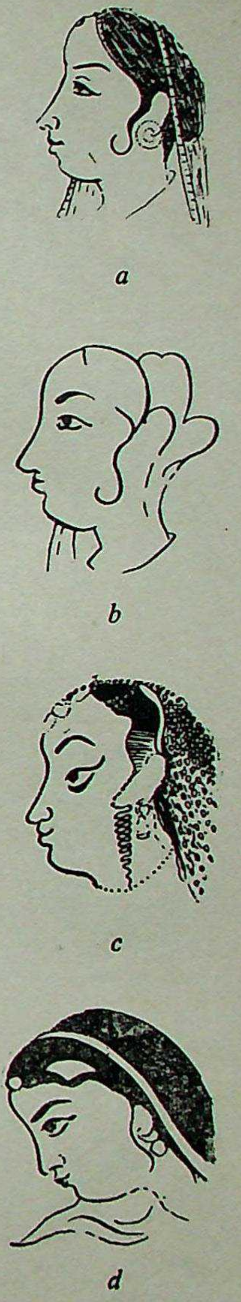

Fig. 29

a. Jaisalmer face (*c*. 1860 A.D.)

b. Jaisalmer face (*c*. 1825 A.D.)

c. Jodhpur face (*c*. 1820 A.D.)

d. Jaipur face (*c*. 1850 A.D.)

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[1] R. A. Agarawala, *Marwar Murals* (Delhi, 1977), pp. 70-72.

planned using too many bright colours on ordinary plastered-wall. Figs. 29 and 30 show a study of the facial types developed at Jaisalmer.

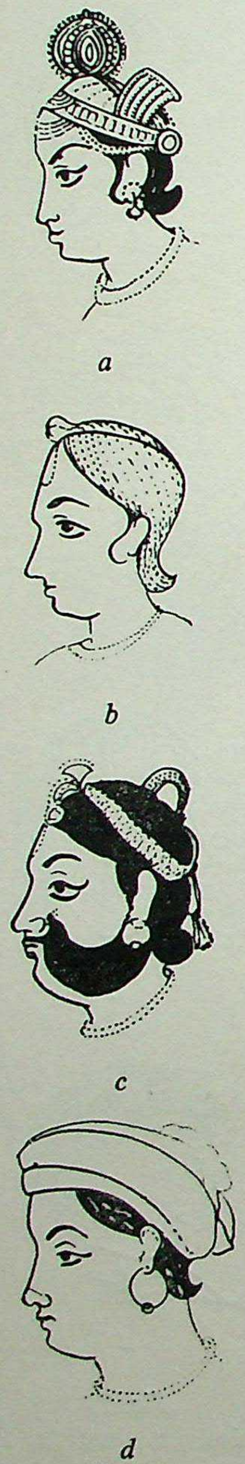

Fig. 30

a. Jaisalmer face (*c.* 1860 A.D.)
b. Jaisalmer face (*c.* 1825 A.D.)
c. Jodhpur face (*c.* 1820 A.D.)
d. Jaipur face (*c.* 1800 A.D.)

Miniatures

The development of miniature painting school at Jaisalmer is rather difficult to trace. Beautiful miniatures which seem to occupy an esteemed position in the Rajasthani school of paintings are found in sufficient numbers at Jaisalmer. To arrange them in a chronological order and to study them from different angles is an uphill task. After ceaseless and constant study of a number of miniatures in the collection of local connoisseurs, Durbars, Gyan Bhandar as also the two excellent line-drawings in my own collection (Plates 85 and 86) I could observe certain unique features different from other local schools of Rajasthani paintings. These paintings represent local traits and are truly characteristic of Jaisalmer school.

My study did not reveal as yet any example of Jaisalmer painting—either mural or miniature prior to the 19th century. The Bhandar has some good specimens. Besides, Shri Jitmal Soni, Devi Lal Soni and Manak Lal, and the Royal House possess a number of local paintings. In the collection of Royal House some miniatures seem to be painted by Kashi, a painter of Udaipur; one miniature in which King is seen riding a horse, has an inscription '*chetāro Kashi Udaipur ko*' (Kashi painter of Udaipur). A number of other paintings are said to be rendered by him, among which some royal portraits and procession scenes are noteworthy. This painter might have migrated here along with an Udaipur princess who was married to Mahārāwal Bairisal. His style of work displays the trend of late 19th century and one can find an influence of Jaipur school of painting (*cf.* Plate 87). Mahārāwal Bairisal had been a source of inspiration to painters and artists and patronised them during his regime.

During this time, his contemporary on the Jodhpur throne was Maharaja Takhat Singh (1843-1873), who had also been a lover of art, and many apartments in the Jodhpur fort and the Tija-Maji temple in the city were embellished with paintings.[1] Around 1860 and onwards Jaipur influence was making its impact felt more and more in these western states of the erstwhile Rajputana. Jaisalmer was not an exception to this as seen from the study of miniatures. A mixed influence of Jodhpur and Jaipur tradition was at work here in this desert city (*Cf.* Fig. 31, 32 and 33). Some specimens in the *darbār* bear testimony to this hybridization. In the blooming eyes and swelling neck-line and in heavier forms Jodhpur influence is traceable and straight horizon-line and the fly-whisk with clouds resting upon it, with thin lips and the medicore height of the figures tell about the Jaipur's influence. The over-all treatment is towards naturalism with an attempted play of light and shade, specially in trees, ground-space, faces, but lack mechanical perspective. It is interesting that, inspite of this influence, horizon-line had been in the upper most space as practised by Jodhpur school (*Cf.* Fig. 31), but in a less pictorial way (Plate 82). The same can be varified from fig. 32. Dresses are treated in a linear fashion (Plate 83). Polychromatic scheme occupies prime importance in Jaisalmer paintings, including murals. Ultramarine blue and pale-emerald green are the two favourite colours of Jaisalmer painters. The method of overlapping the planes was adopted in space organisation and setting. Besides, a facial type where nose, lips and chin rest on one slanting line, the obtuse angle between forehead and nose-line, and oval eyes form the mannerism of Jaisalmer paintings. This facial type was a local innovation which, besides other characteristics, leads one to arrive at a conclusion that Jaisalmer had an exclusive painting tradition. It is important to note that, while at other places in Rajasthan, styles were disintegrating at this late period, in this city it was flourishing.

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[1] R.A. Agarwala, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26.

Only murals of 1825 and miniatures of 1860 came to my notice but none prior to this date were available. Empty *chūnam* frames in *patuā-havelīs* and in Moti-mahal of Salim Singh might have possessed paintings. Diwan Nathmal's *havelī* also bears some twenty miniatures within *chūman* frame in its *mol*. All these miniatures depict popular subjects including Mumal-Mahendra lovers and Mulraj and Gaj Singh equestrian portraits. All these miniatures seem to belong to late period of 19th century as assessed from their characteristic styles.

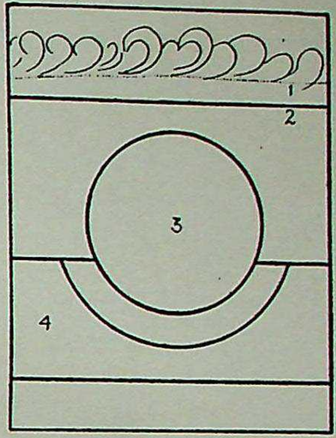

Fig. 31 (Jaisalmer)

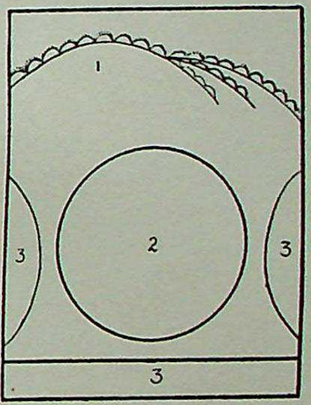

Fig. 32 (Jodhpur)

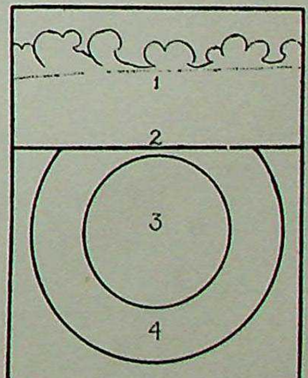

Fig. 33 (Jaipur)

Fig. 31 to 33

1. Cloud-line
2. Horizontal line
3. Active space
4. Supporting space.

Another expression of painting can be seen on *takhatīs* (wooden-board used for learning alphabets) which are seen beautifully decorated with the paintings of Ganesa and Saraswati on their handles. Another important thing in this regard is that *takhatī* has usually red background. One Shri Mohan Singh of Jaisalmer has a beautiful collection of these *takhatīs*.

To sum up it can be said that Jaisalmer had, at one time, evolved a painting tradition of its own. Murals, and miniatures are well schemed, properly coloured and artistically painted with depth and imagination. Some of the paintings have not seen the light of the day, some are in the corners of *havelīs*, some are neglected. Here if one cares to do systamatic work, there is much scope and one can uncover several specimens of beautiful paintings.

CHAPTER VI

LASTING IMPRESSION

I wish to share with my readers, certain cherished fond memories and unforgettable moments of this place concealed in the folds of my heart and imprinted in my mind. Those past moments, as sweet as nectar, divinely beautiful and as nascent as of today gives immense joy.

Jaisalmer fascinates the young and old, the literate and illiterate alike. It has charm of its own and bewitching beauty. The chance visitor to Jaisalmer will be simply dazed gazing at the plethora of carvings and designs in every nook and corner, of house fronts, places and *havelis.* The trellis-work, the art design, the carvings, sculpture, the floral motifs, on windows, porches, porticos, balconies, on wood or stone, are exuberant defying description.

It seems that the seasons, the Sun, Moon, Winds, Night and Day all in their own way play a role in beautifying this city. Jaisal fort with its royal splendour stands majestically on the hill-top overlooking the city on its slopes glistening in golden hue [greets the first rays of the rising Sun. It changes its mood at mid-noon and appears as a sparkling sword in the hands of a Rajput warrior in the midst of a battle field. At sun-set the hot dust-laden winds blowing from the desert sands imparts another tone of beauty resembling a rugged worker with dust-laden limbs coming back to home after a day's hard-toil. In the cold nights with starlit sky, the city with its blinking lights looks like a lone ship anchored in a forlorn harbour in the vast stretch of desert-sand. On a moonlit night the palaces, *havelis* and tall buildings shining against the backdrop of the sandy desert appears as a silvery orchard with trees tall and short blooming with flowers and heavy with fruits. Rains though sparse brings renewed vigour with water flowing through the dry river beds.

The colourful cultural life of Jaisalmer harmoniously blends into its varied tones and moods. The ladies laden with heavy water pots glide through narrow alleys with sweet smiles on their faces charming everyone. Aliens Europeans riding a camel in Jaisalmer gazing with awe at the aristic facades of temples and *havelīs* have become a normal sight inJaisalmer. The craftsmen and artisans after their days busy work assemble on a raised platform to spend an evening with carefree abandon and leisure and are ready to share, a puff from the *hukah* or a morsel of food. This Jaisalmer is ever green in my mind's eye.

APPENDIX

SHRI JINABHADRA SURI GYAN GRANTHA BHANDAR

Granth Bhandārs in Jaisalmer preserve precious and rare collection of manuscripts, especially Jaina manuscripts, most of which were brought from Gujarat for safe-keeping. Many of these manuscripts are illustrated and provide abundant scope for a critical study of the development of Jaina miniature art. Illustrated Manuscripts throw little light upon the development of paintings in Jaisalmer yet, their presence in Jaisalmer add to the importance of the city.

Among the manuscript-libraries, the noted Shri Jinabhadra Suri Gyan Granth Bhandara has a rich collection of old manuscripts. It is situated in one basement-vault of Shri Sambhavanathaji temple in the fort and was organized in 1443 A.D. by Khartarāgachchhāchāryā Shri Jinabhadra Suri. He personally established this with the sole objective to protect the sacred manuscripts procured mainly from Khambat, Anhalapur and Patan in Gujarat, when Muslim-power wanted to destroy this cultural and artistic heritage. It would not be an exaggeration to quote India's first president, the late Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who visited this Bhandar on 31-3-1955 :

> "You are by guarding this invaluable collection of literature in the difficult times of invasions not only served your own 'faith' and people instead the whole Bharatvarsha and the country is indebted ..."

After a long span of about 500 years since its foundation the Bhandar was rejuvinated at the behest of Khartarāgachchhāchāryā Shri Jinakripachandra Sureshwar Maharaj. Again, in 1951 Maharaj Shri Punyavijayji called upon the custodians to take fresh measures for the better preservation and security of these valuable texts. As a result each manuscript has now been put inside specially prepared aluminium boxes which are kept in an iron-safe. In the olden days too, safety measures were taken (as seen by me), in that a manuscript was put inside a red leather box alongwith pieces of bark of a particular tree possessing insecticidal qualities. Col. Tod who visited the Bhandar has referred to the collections here in his book entitled 'Travels in Western India'. Thereafter, in 1874, both Dr. Buhler and Dr. Jacobi had been to this Granth Bhandar; Buhler observed that, "Through this temple and the wealth of Jaina community, Jaisalmer has obtained a high fame as one of the principal seats of the Jaina faith. Especially, however, is the renown of the Bhandar everywhere celebrated which according to the statements of Guzeratis surpasses all similar Bhandars in the world." About 30 years later Prof. R. G. Bhandarkar, an erudite scholar, came over here to assess the value of this cultural property, who has appended a note in the Archaeological Survey Reports of 1904-05 and 1905-06. In 1909 A.D., a catalogue of Gyan Granth Bhandar's Manuscripts was prepared by Muni Punyavijayji, which was enlarged later under the general editorship of Shri Dal Sukh Malvania and published sometime back from Ahmedabad.

Other Bhandars here viz., Brahād Khartaragachchhāryā Bhandar, Lokagachchha Gyan Bhandar, Panchano Bhandar, Bada Upasraya Bhandar, Tharushah Gyan Bhandar and Tapagachchha Gyan Bhandar, have all now been merged into Shri Jinabhadra Suri Gyan Bhandar. The total collection in this repository number over 3000 including five hundred palm-leaf manuscripts among which is the vitally important and oldest known palm-leaf manuscript, *Oghaniryukti Vritti*, composed by Dronacharya in A.D. 1060 (serial number 84). In this manuscript a beautiful painting (folio number 105) depicting Shri Devi, a lively figure of Kamadeva shooting an arrow, one roaring lion, one elephant and a *kalasa*, is worth noting. To the same category, another manuscript entitled *Daśaivakālikacarita*, also bears some decorative roundels.

Similarly an oldest paper-manuscript entitled *Nyāyavartikā Tātparya Tīkā* written by Vachaspati Mishra in A.D. 1222 is found in this collection. Out of this vast collection about fifty-two manuscripts are partly or profusely illustrated in colourful forms. *Kalpa-Sūtra* (serial number 425) of A.D. 1216, *Kalpa-Sūtra* (number 82), *Mahāvīracarita* (number 263) and *Śārddhasataka Prakarṇa Vrattiśāra* (number 186), all these palm-leaf manuscripts belonging to the 14th century are wonderfully illustrated, and, likewise, *Kālikācāryā Kathā* (number 422), *Pāṇḍava-Carita* (number 419) and the *Śalibhadra-Chāpī*—all these paper manuscripts belonging to the 15th century are finally decorated. Several other manuscripts bear golden or silver letters besides some decorative motifs in colour. Also some wooden-covers are tastefully decorated with Jaina subjects (Plate 79). *Triśaṣṭhā-śalākā Chitrapaṭṭikā* is considered to be the best for its look and pictorial composition. This monastic library covers a wide range of manuscripts connected with the systems of Indian philosophy, poetry, rhetoric, drama, romance, literature, stories, lexicons, grammer, etc. The maximum and the minimum format of the manuscripts vary from 97×7 cm. to 22×4 cm.

This rich collection is immensely useful for studies in the field of art, literature and culture. Problems on stylistic interconnections between the various painting idioms and Jaina history and culture can be better understood if a thorough study of manuscripts is made. Its importance is further enhanced as it treasures a very few miniatures belonging to Jaisalmer school of painting (Plate 81).

GLOSSARY

abhaya	: Posture of the hand indicating protection.
adhisthāna	: Plinth part of a temple.
alasakanyā	: Carefree lass.
āmalakā	: *Śikhara's* wheel-shaped stone-disc.
apasarā	: Heavenly damsel.
ardhamaṇḍapa	: Ante chamber adjoining the *garbhagriha*.
āsana	: Posture.
atha	: Octagon.
āyāgapaṭṭa	: Stone tablet bearing carvings pertaining to Jaina mythology.
*banglīdar**	: Crescent shade-lining in stone.
bāri	: Opening across the stone wall-panel.
*belī**	: Creeping floral design.
bhamaṭī	: Verandah of the subsdiary shrine.
*būṭā**	: A unit in a floral design.
*burj**	: Bastion.
chatuski	: Bay.
chaublā	: Checkers.
*chauhatā**	: A square; courtyard.
*chhatarī**	: A stone canopy.
*chhyās**	: Hexagon.
*chiterā**	: Painter.
devadāsī	: Temple-dansuese.
deva-kulikā	: Subsidiary shrine.
*gajdhar**	: Mason.
*gazarā**	: Foliated-round.
ghata-pallava	: Pot-foliage design.
*gokhadā**	: Simple projected balcony.
gumbaj	: Dome.
havelī	: A beautiful mansion.
jagatī	: Raised oblong platform.
jālī	: Trellis.
janghā	: Portion between *jagatī* and *śikhara*.
*jharokhā**	: Decorated balcony.
*jhūlan-jharokhā**	: A balcony projecting like cradle.

kalpa-vriksa	Mythical tree capable of fulfilling the desires.
*kanwal**	Oriel window.
karṇa	Corner projection.
karṅa-śriṅga	Turret of the corner.
*khadīn**	An irrigated desert-patch through a local devise of sand barrier.
*kharliyā**	Mortar-designs.
*khatarvā**	Donkey-hoof-pattern.
*korṇī**	Design.
*lahariyā**	Wave-pattern.
lalitāsana	A comfortable sitting posture.
*lūm**	Hanging-knobs.
*margā**	Dune.
mahā-maṇḍapa	Central pillared hall.
maṇḍavara	Portion including *pītha*, *vedībhandha* and *jhanghā*.
*maukhiyā**	Gargoyle.
*mer**	Fort.
*mol**	Decorated and furnished hall.
mūla-nāyaka	Main diety.
mūla-prāsāda	Sanctum proper.
*nokdār**	Steep-curved shade-lining over arches.
*otā**	A raised platform running along with the front portion of the house.
padam-śilā (*lolaka*)	Elaborately carved lotus pendant of a ceiling.
parikara	Subsidiary divine-carvings in the encirculing stone of idol.
*parol**	Gateway.
*pathiyāl**	Back portion of the ground floor.
patra-śākhā	Jamb of a doarway carved with foliage.
phānsanā	Stepped roof.
pītha	Pedestal-base.
pradaksiṇa-patha	Circumambulatory passage.
prākāra	Enclosure wall.
sabhā-maṇḍapa	Assembly hall.
*salāvate**	Stone-carver.
saṁbarṇa	Pyramidical temple roof with bell-finials.
śrāvaka	Jain house-holder.
surasundarī	A celestial nymph.
sūrajmukhī	Sun flower shaped ornamental roundel.
*surangdār-pillar**	Pillar resembling a tunnel shape.
tala	Floor of a shrine.
*tārāphūl**	A hexagonal star formed from two interposed equilateral triangles.

*thalī**	A region of sandy waste.
*tibe**	Sand-dunes.
toraṇa	An ornamental arch.
trika-maṇḍapa	Mandapa with three bays.
urū-śṛṅga	Subsdiary spires imposed on the four sikhara-wall.
vasant	Foliated arabesque.

N.B. Words with asterisk mark are locally spoken by Jaisalmeri masons.

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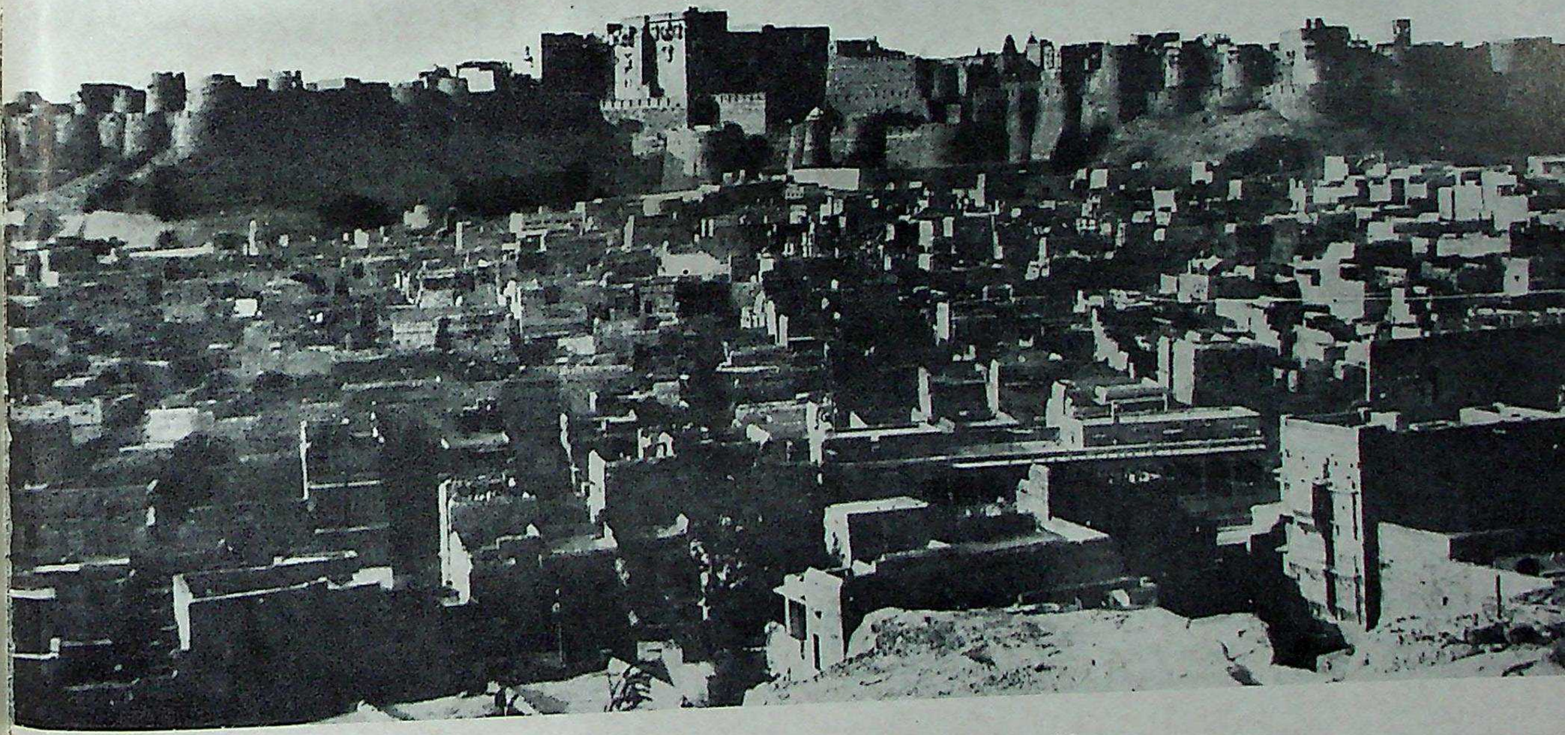
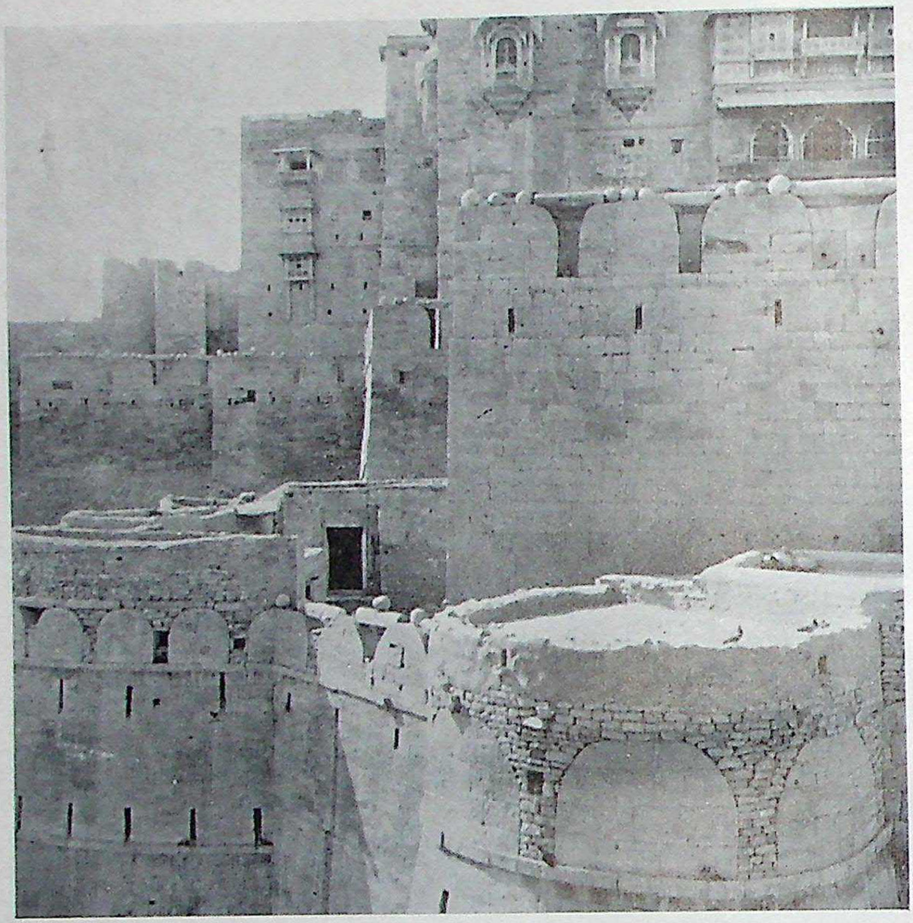
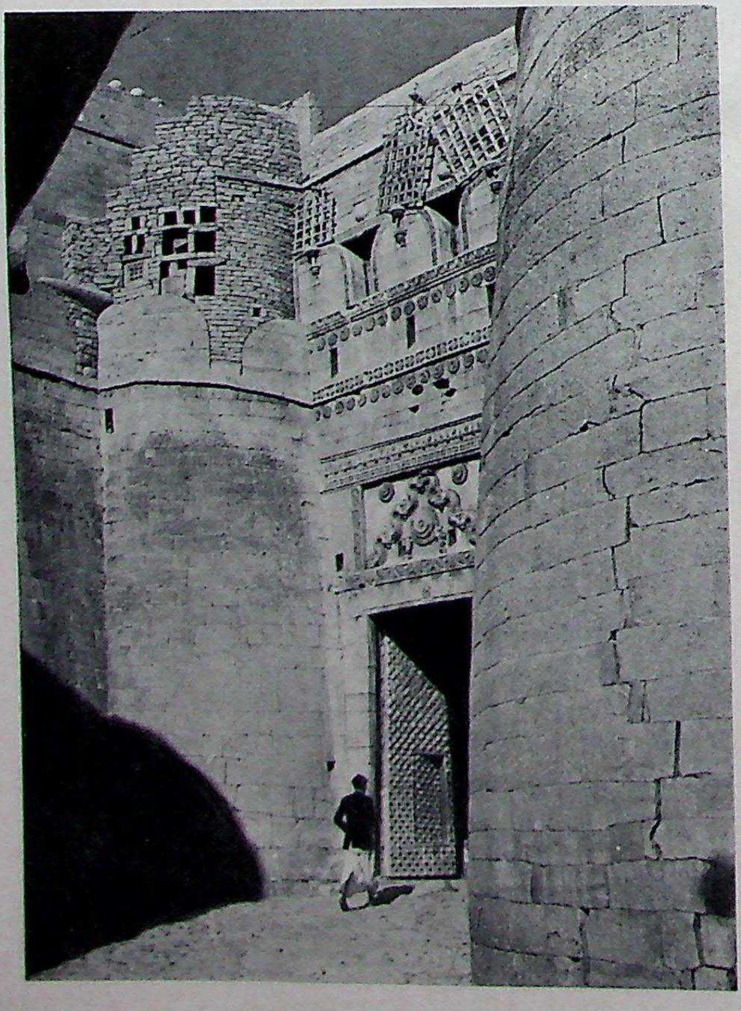


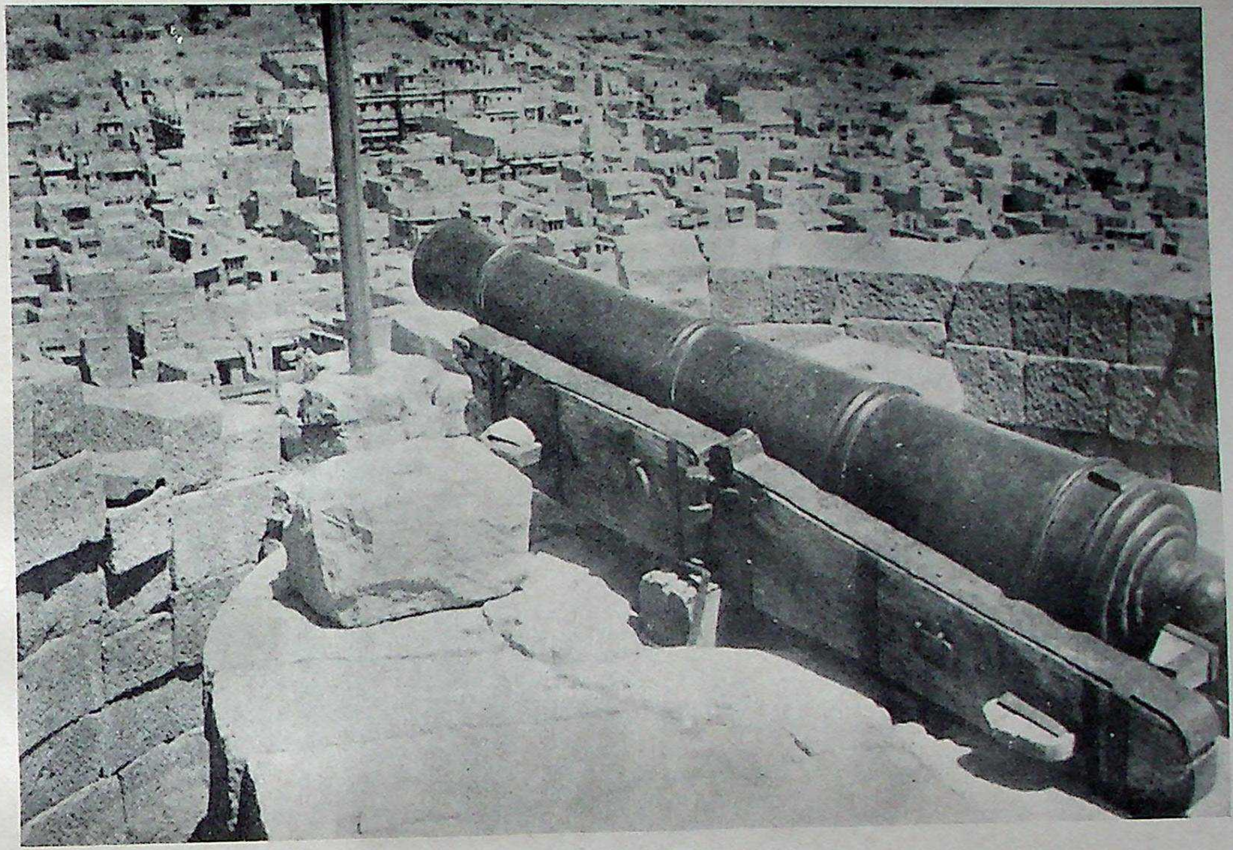
1. A view of Jaisal fort from northern side.



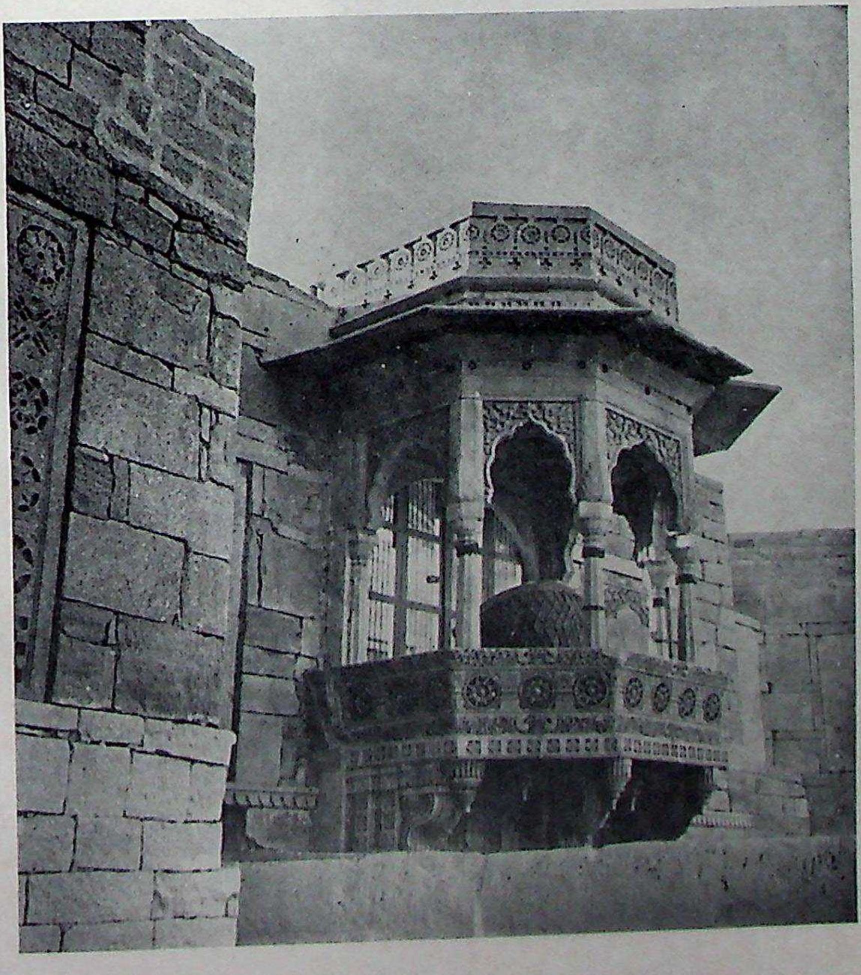
2. Bastions converted into residences.



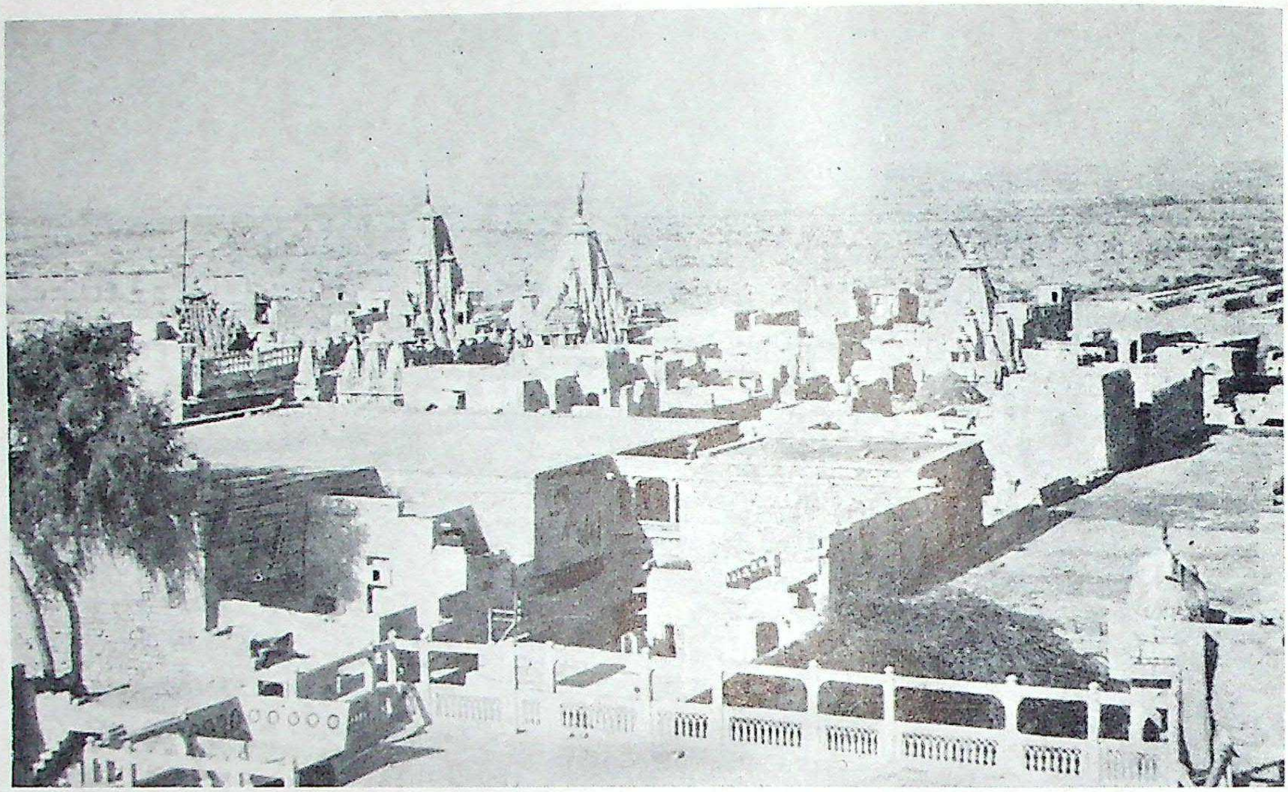
8. Suraj-*parol*.



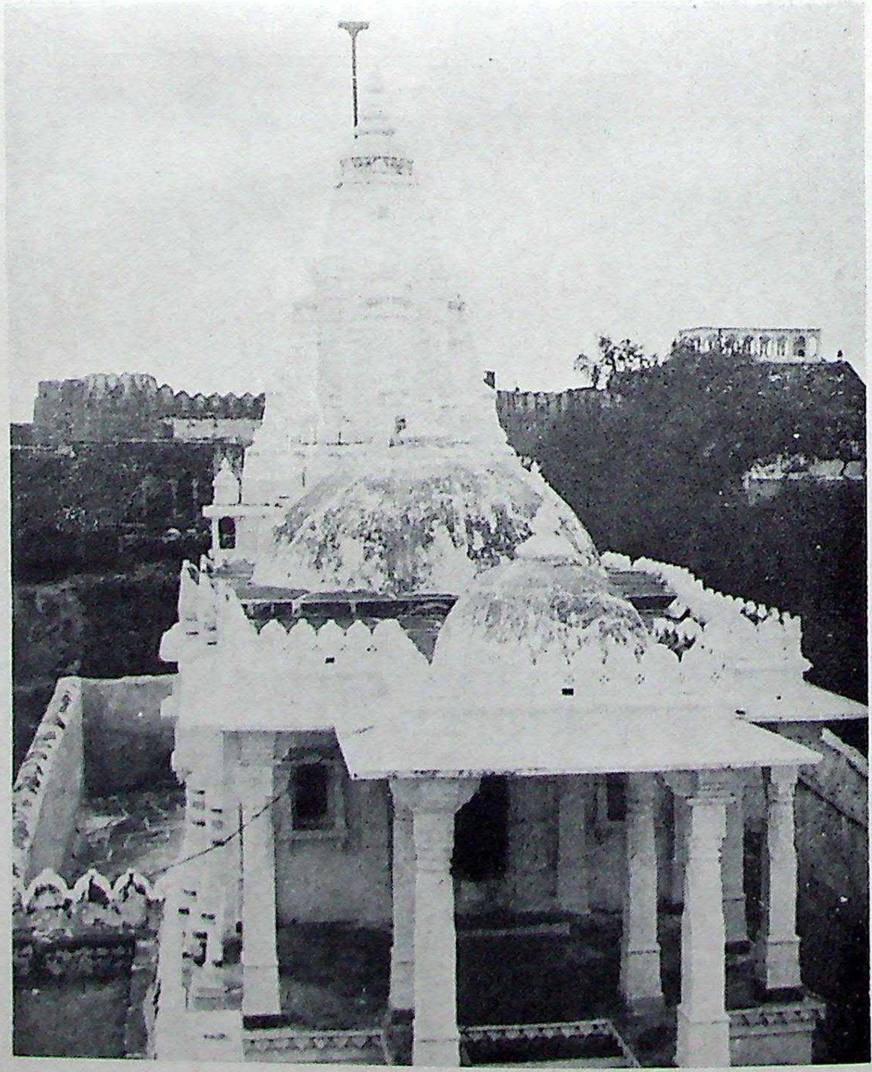
4. Canon on bastion of the main fort-wall.



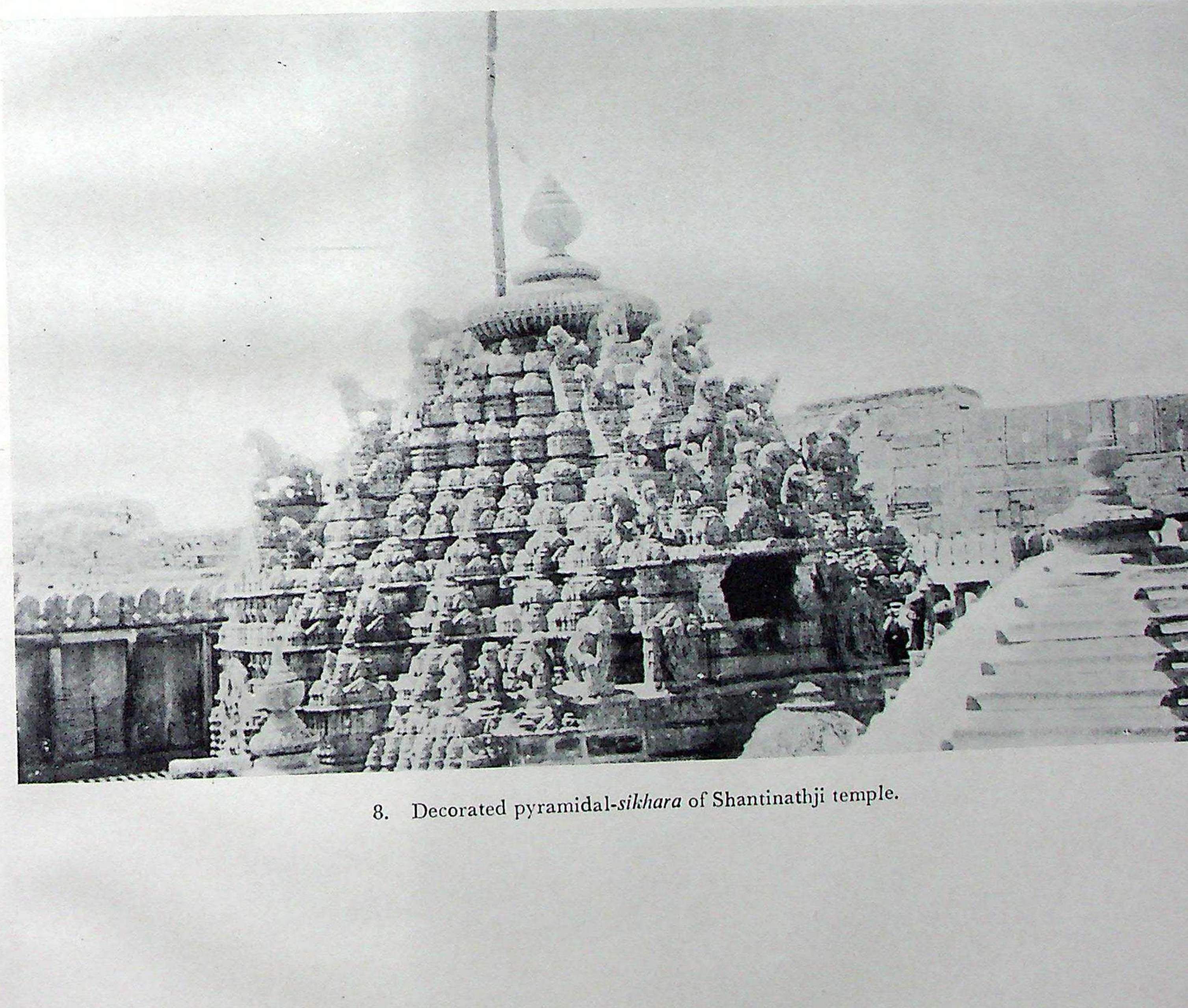
5. Decorated porch of the Fort with a drum inside.



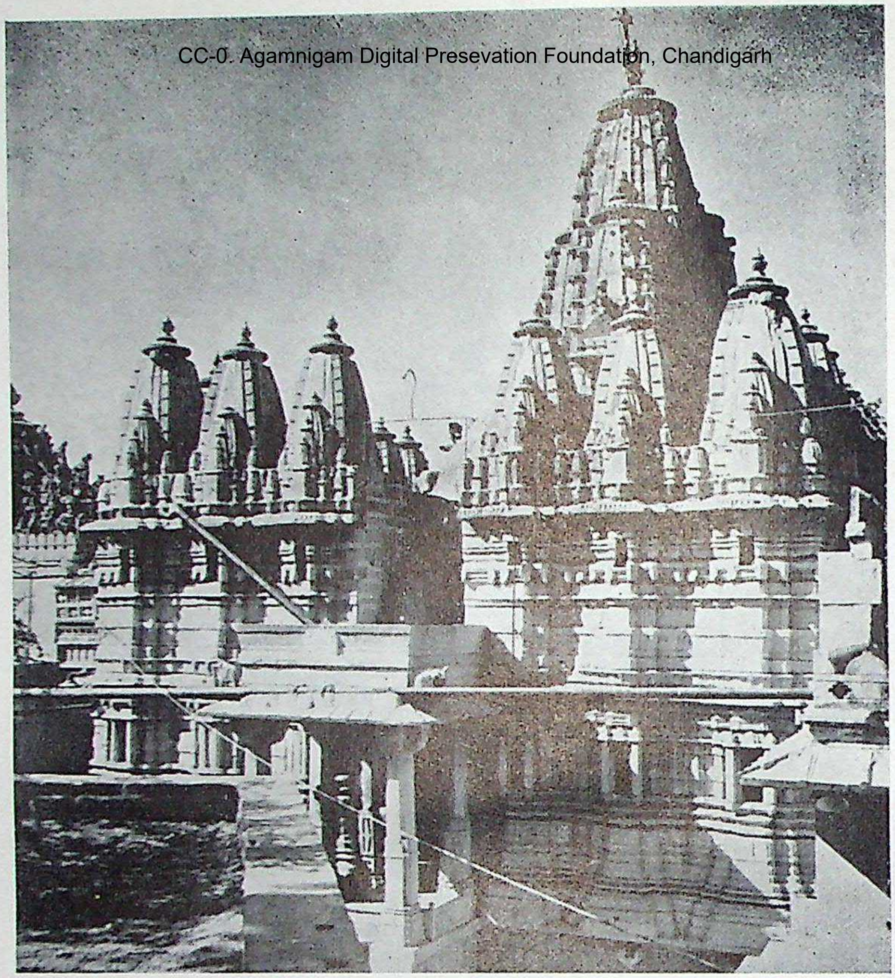
6. Ariel view of the cluster of temples inside the Jaisal fort.



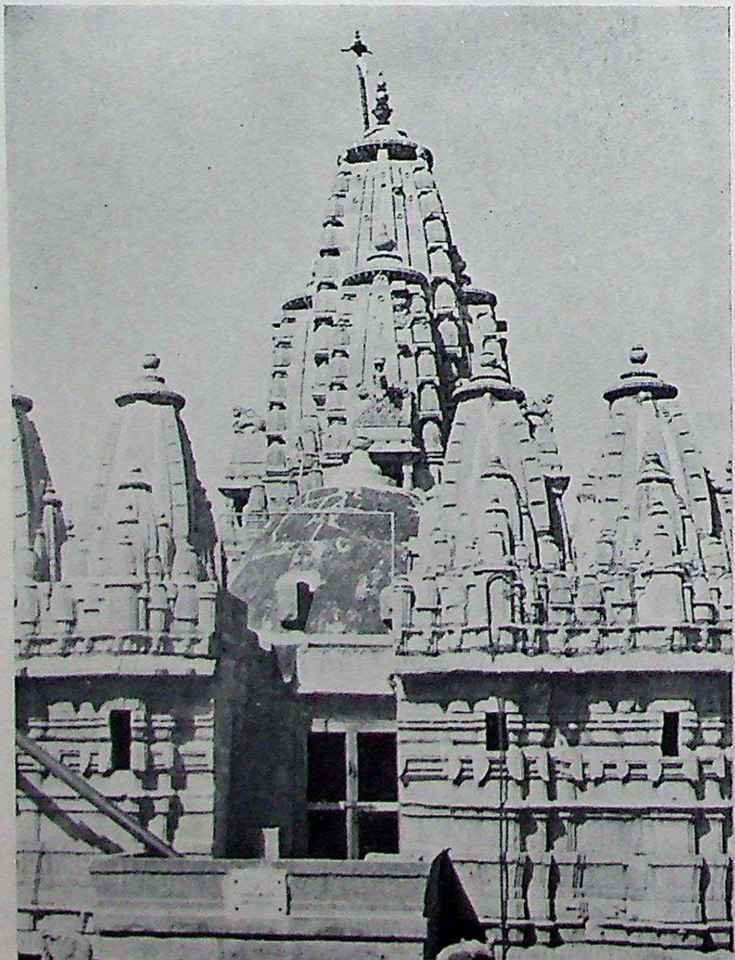
7. Jain temple at Pokaran.

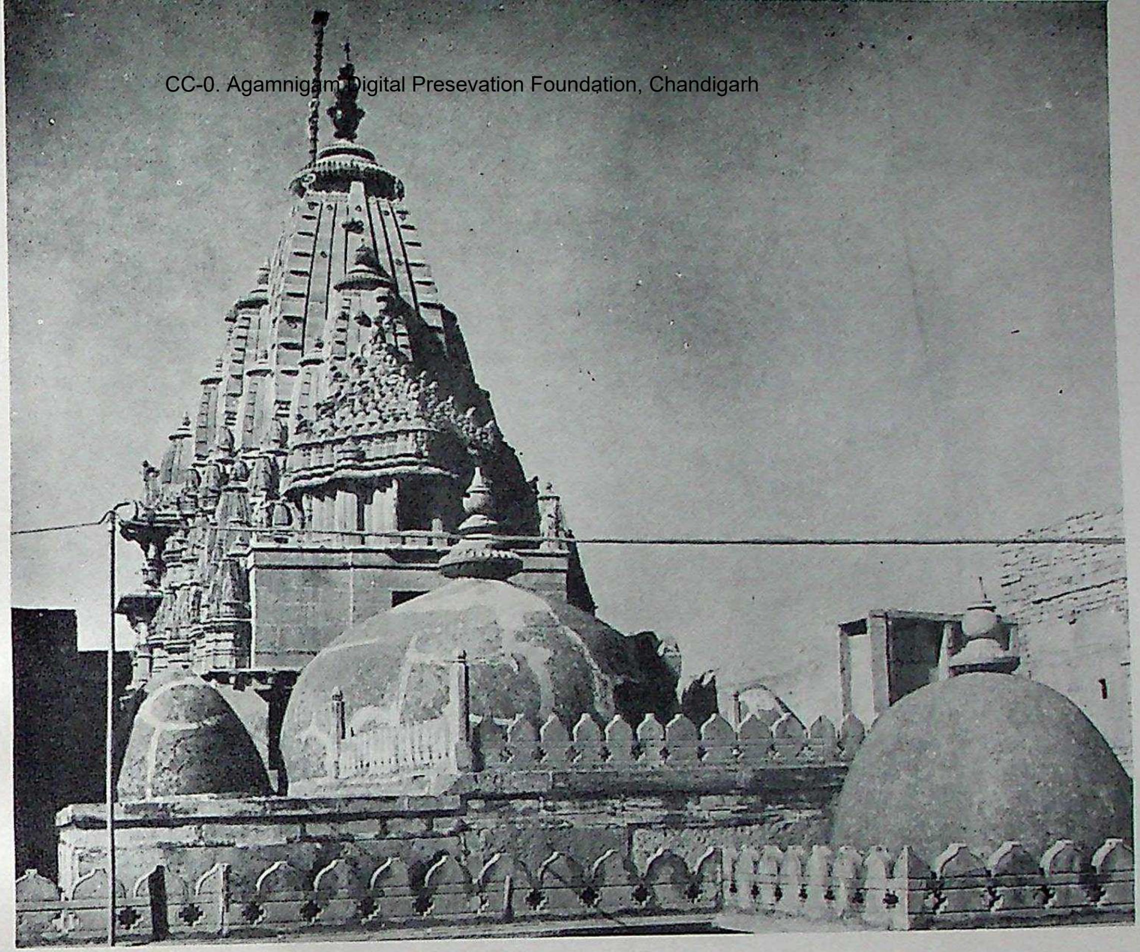


8. Decorated pyramidal-*sikhara* of Shantinathji temple.

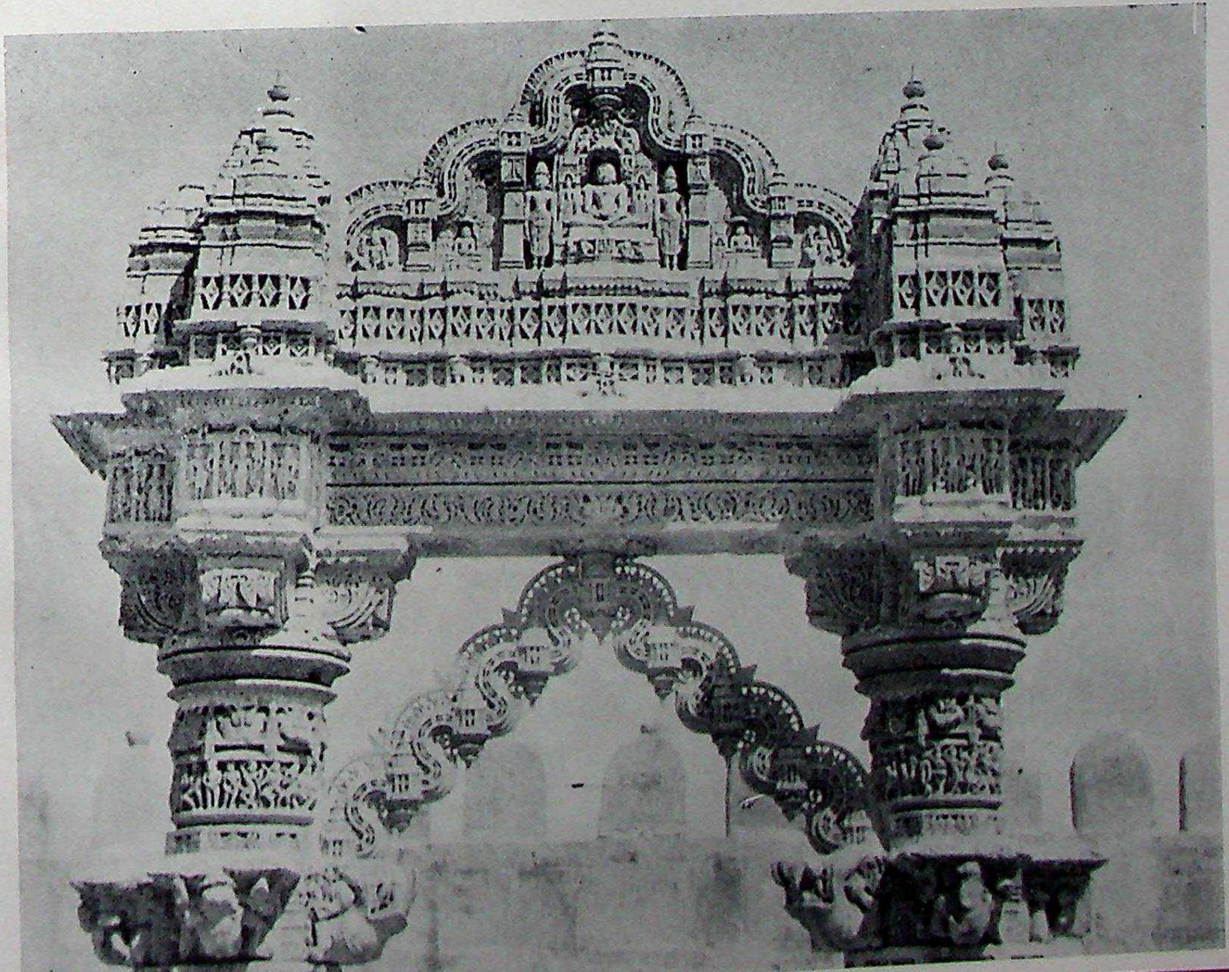


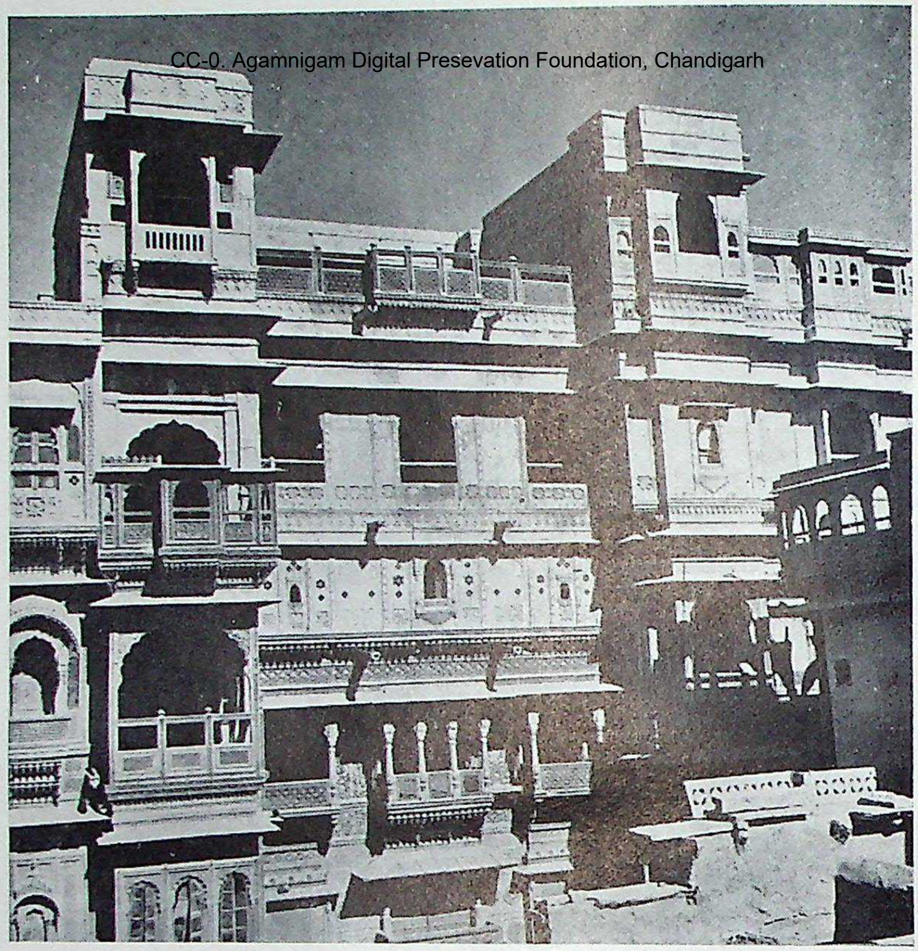
9. Front portion of the Chandraprabhuji temple.
10. *Sikharas* of the Chandrabhuji temple.





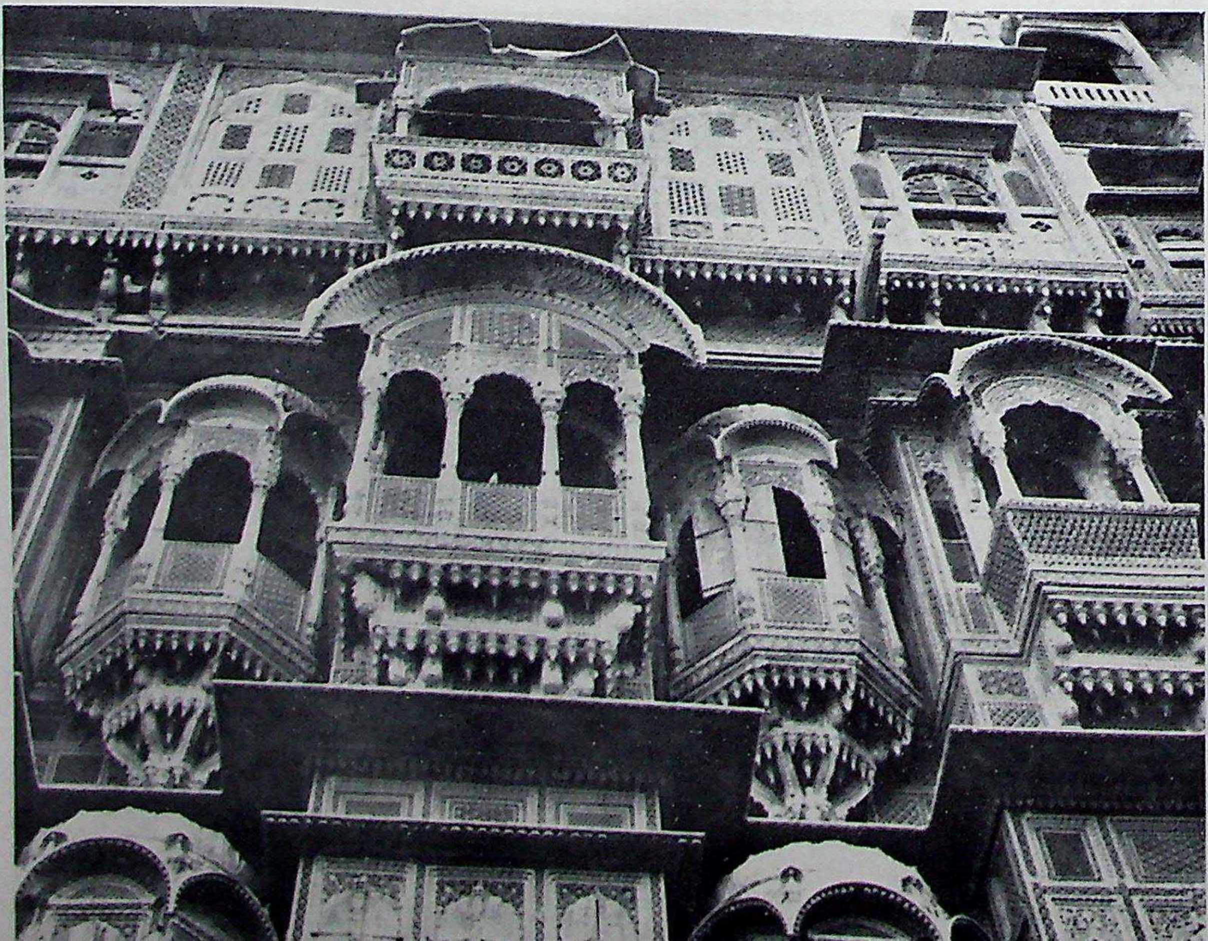
11. Decorated *sikhara* of Rishabhdeva temple.
12. *Torana* of the parsvanath temple at Lodurva.

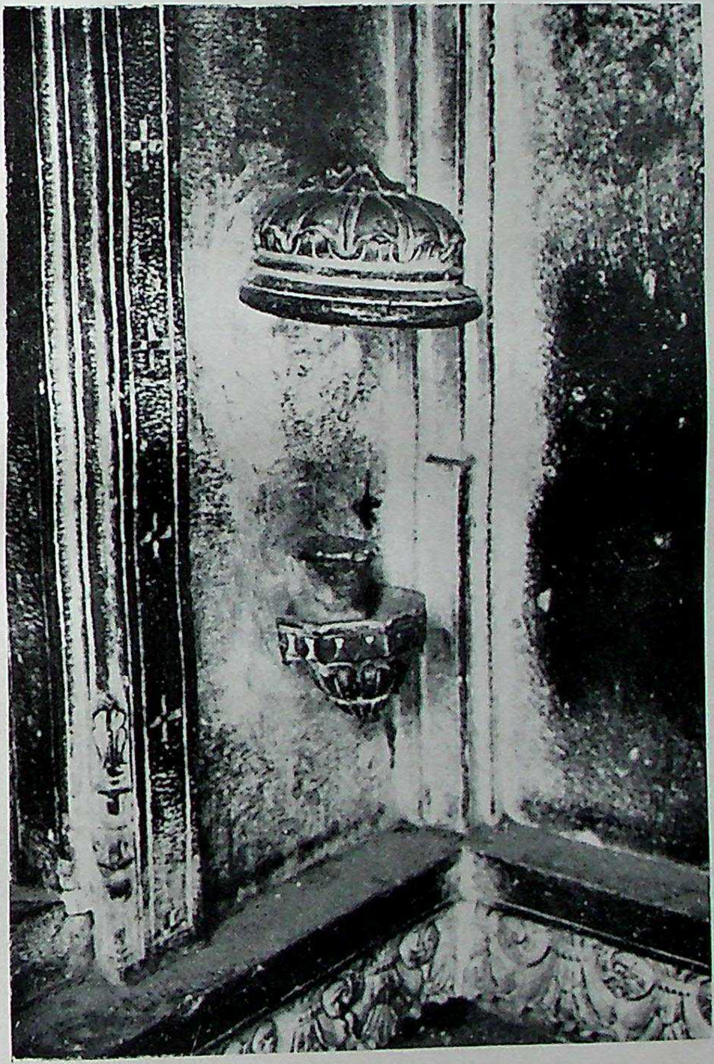




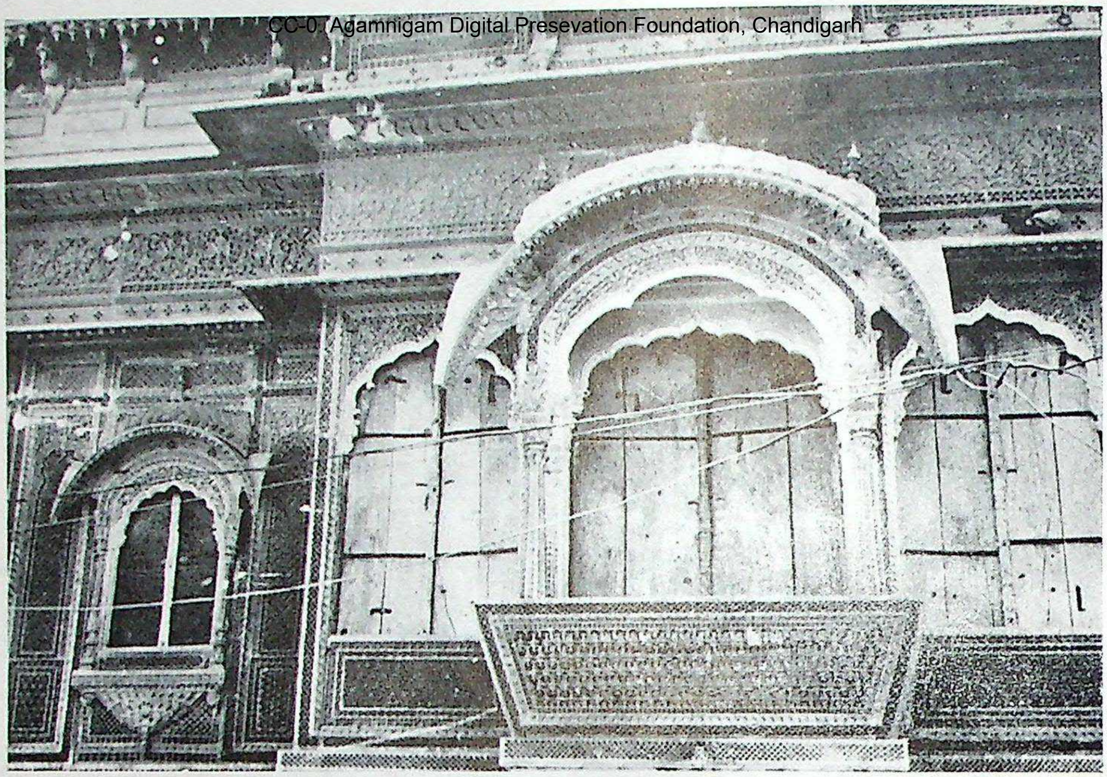
13. *Jharokha* and *baris* in the third Patua-*haveli*.

14. Another view of artistically decorated *jharokha*, Patua-*haveli*.



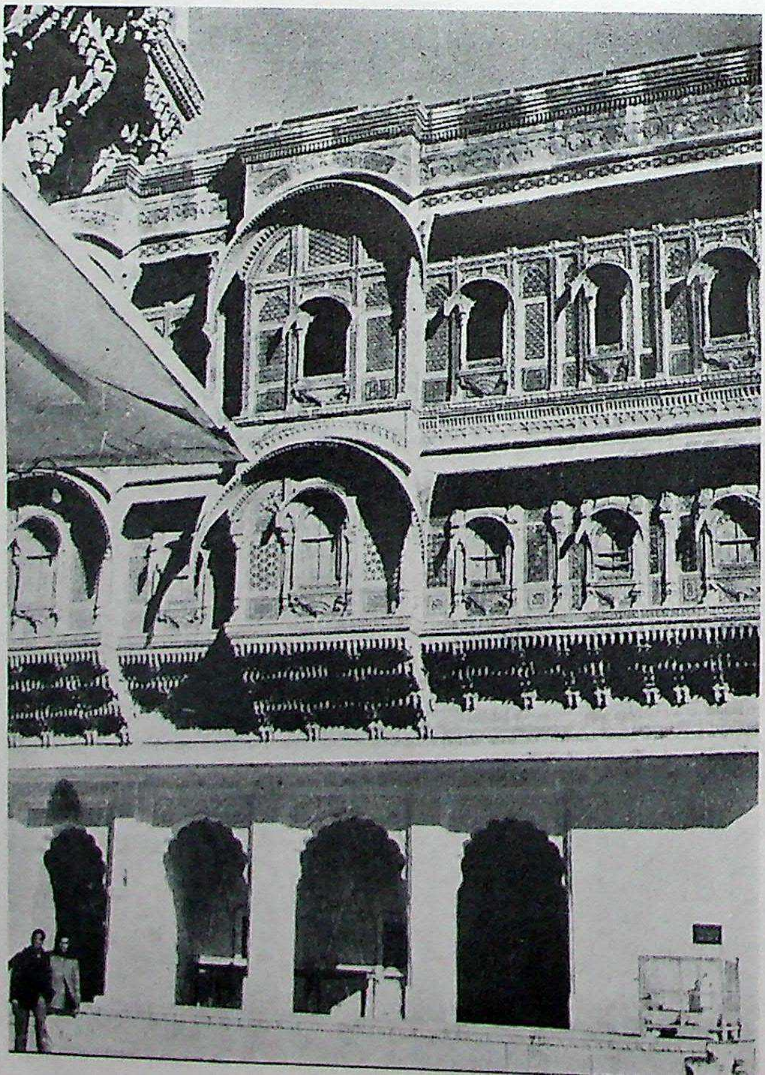


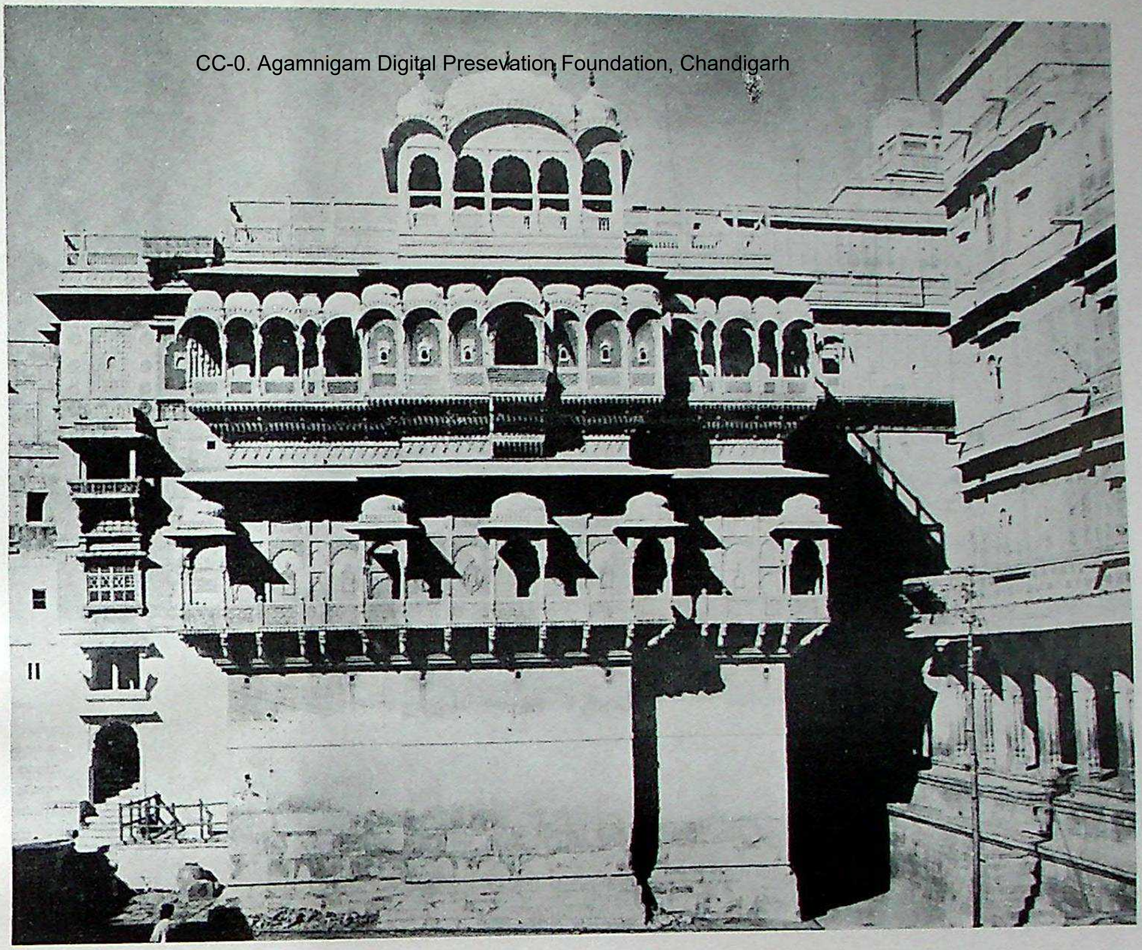
15. A lamp-post carved in the wall.



16. Decorative frieze and *jharokhas*, Patua-*haveli*.

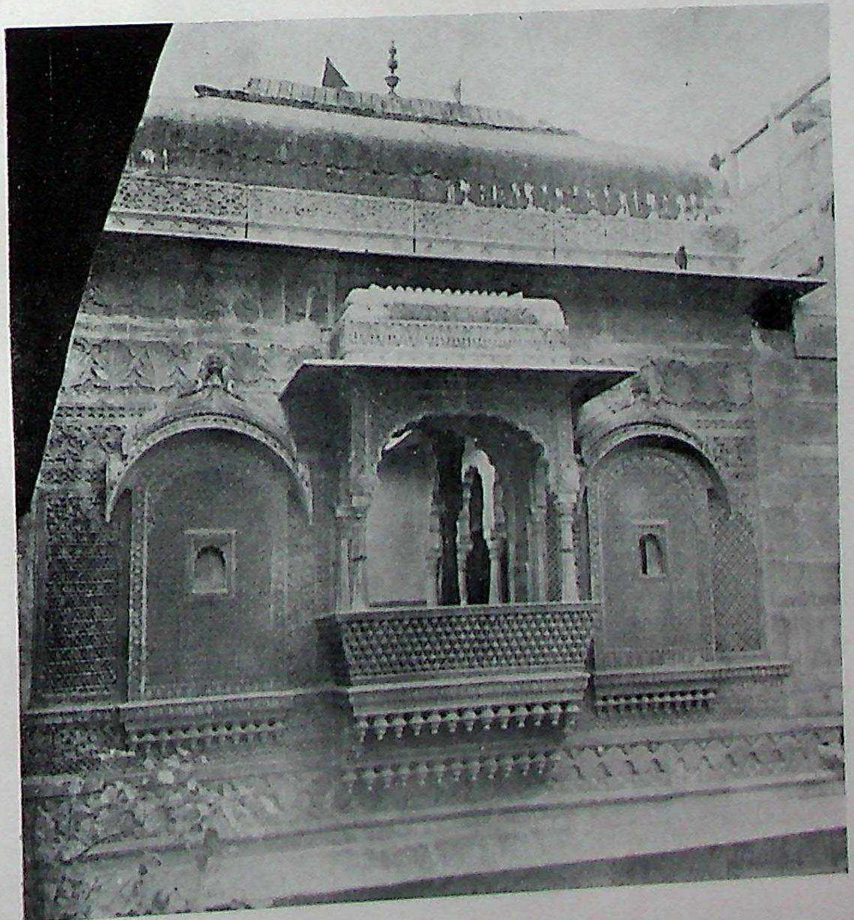
17. View of the *Zenana-mahal* in Jodhpur fort.

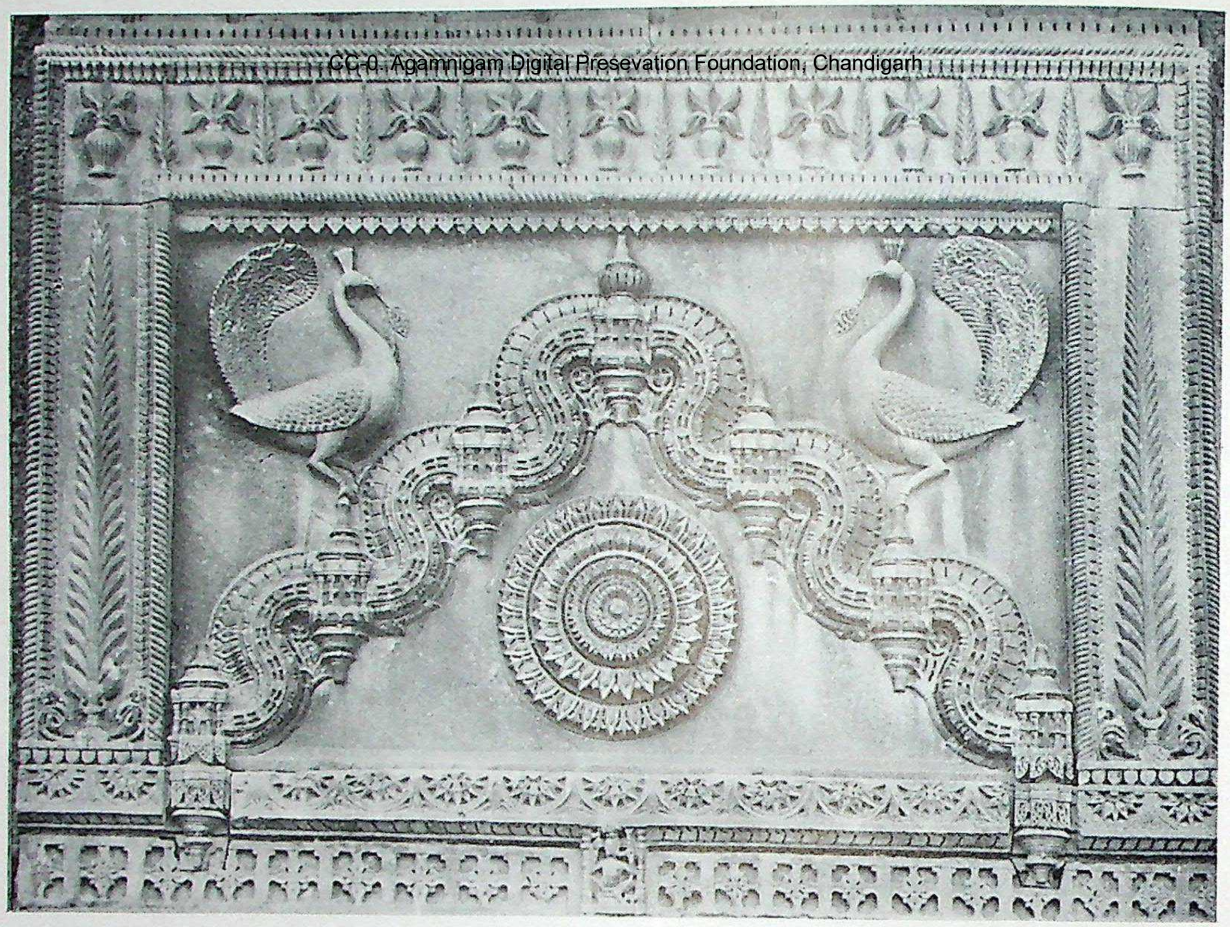




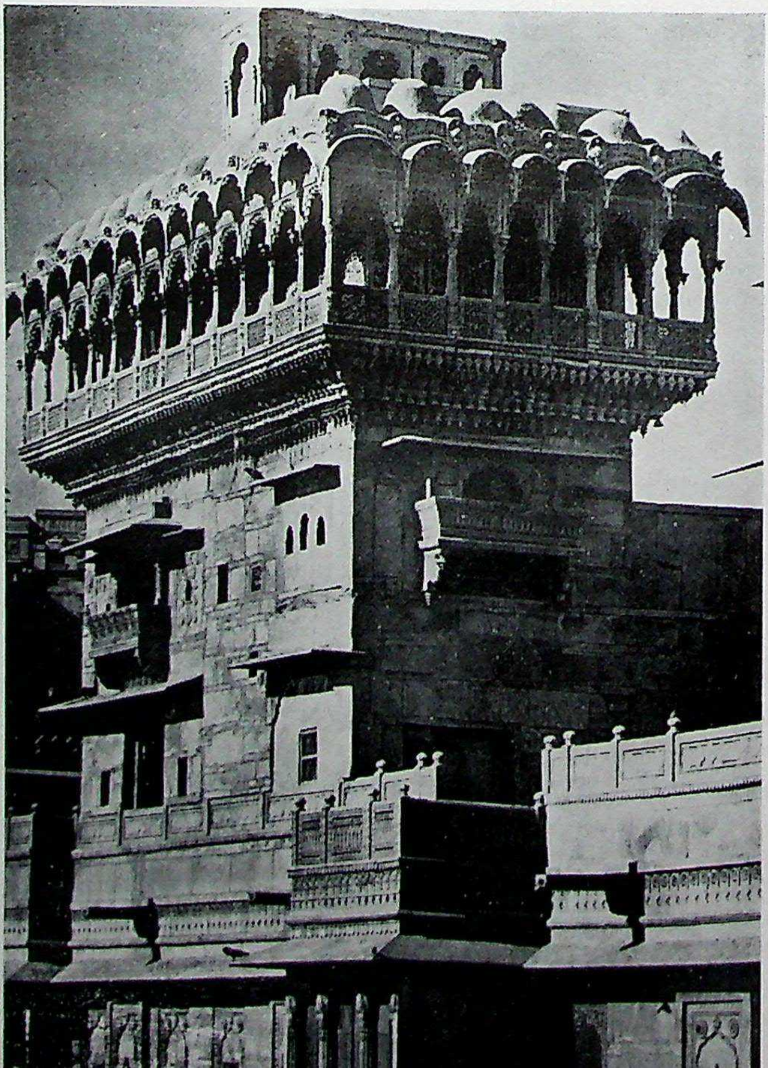
18. Full view of Gajvilas.

19. Beautiful *bari*-panels flanking the carved balcony of Gajvilas.

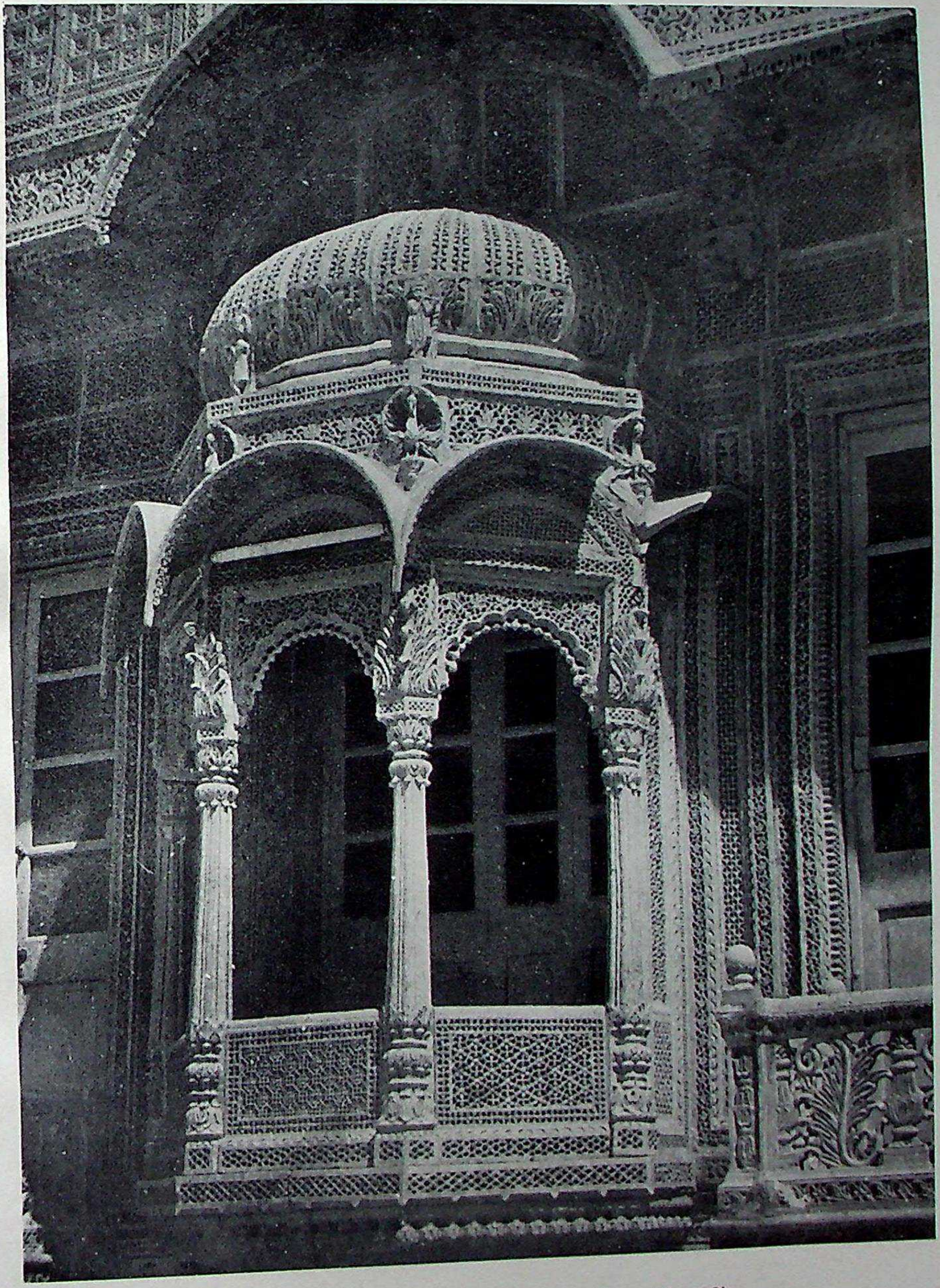




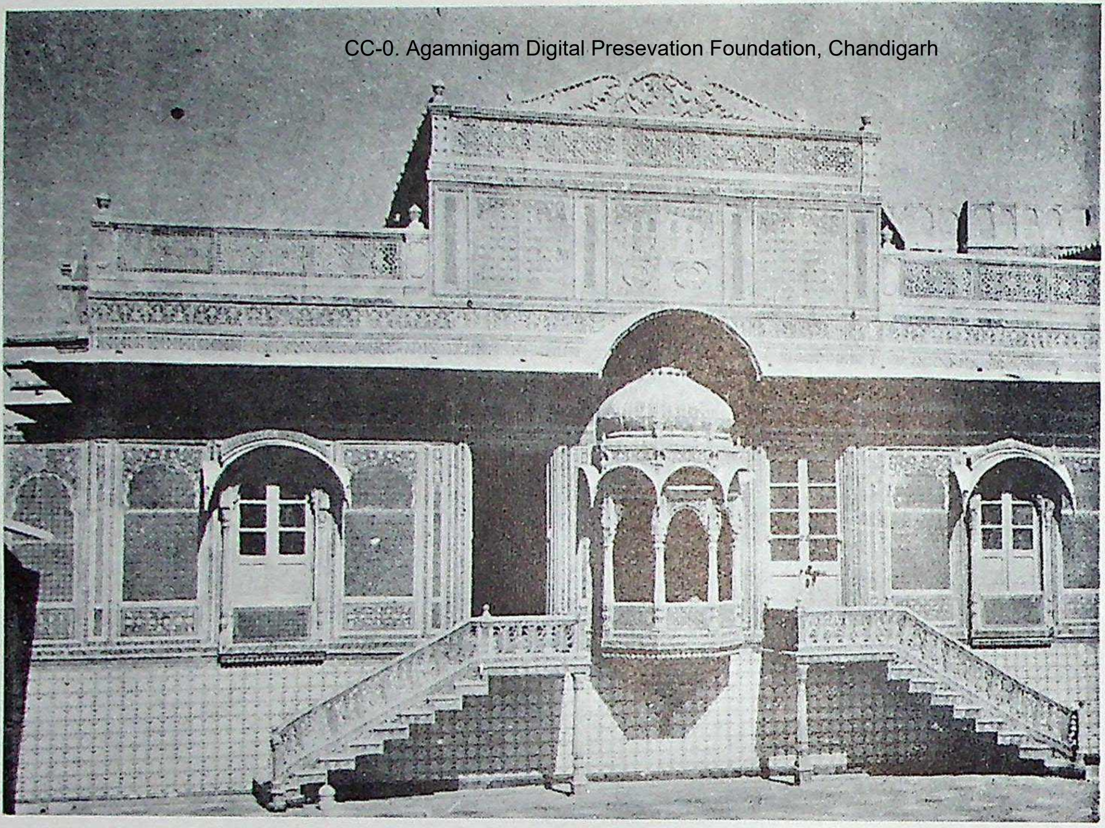
20. A decorative stone tablet over Kanwar-pada's main gate.



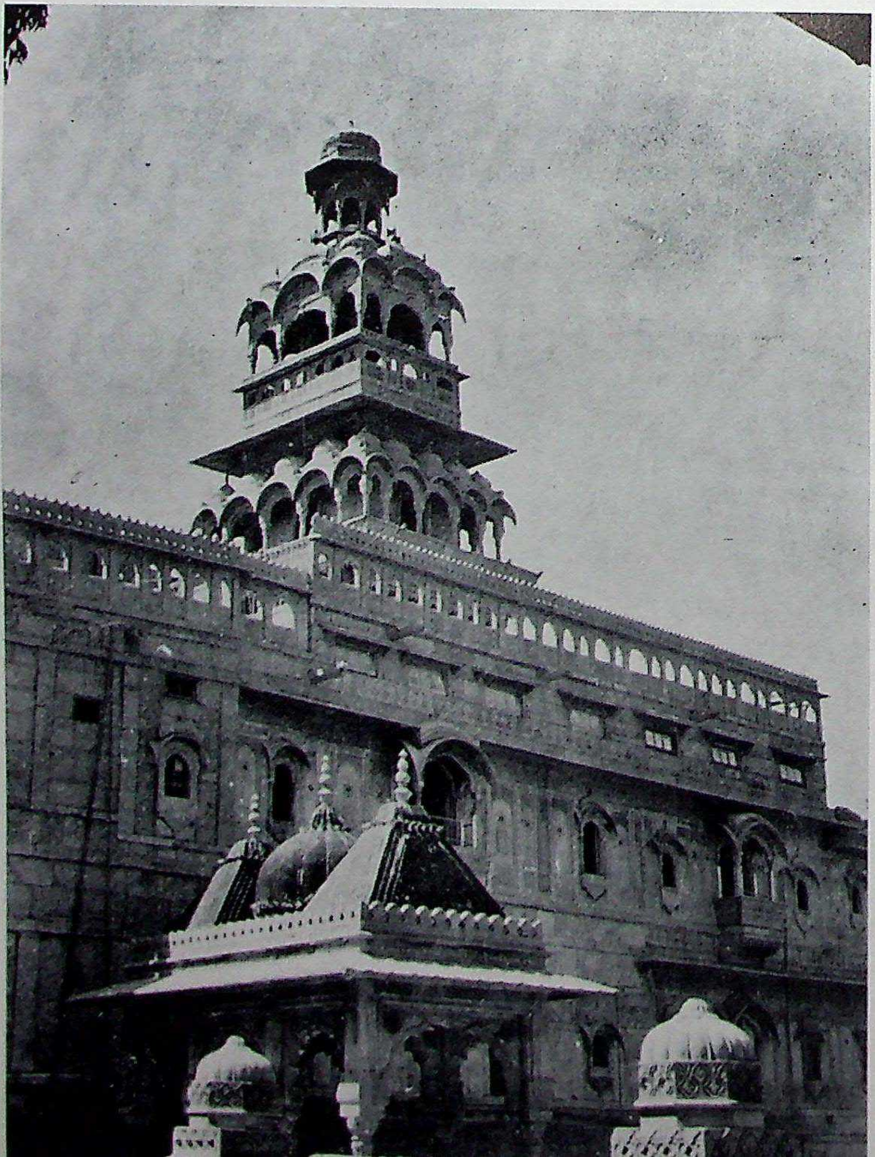
21. Upper portion of Salim Singh *haveli.*



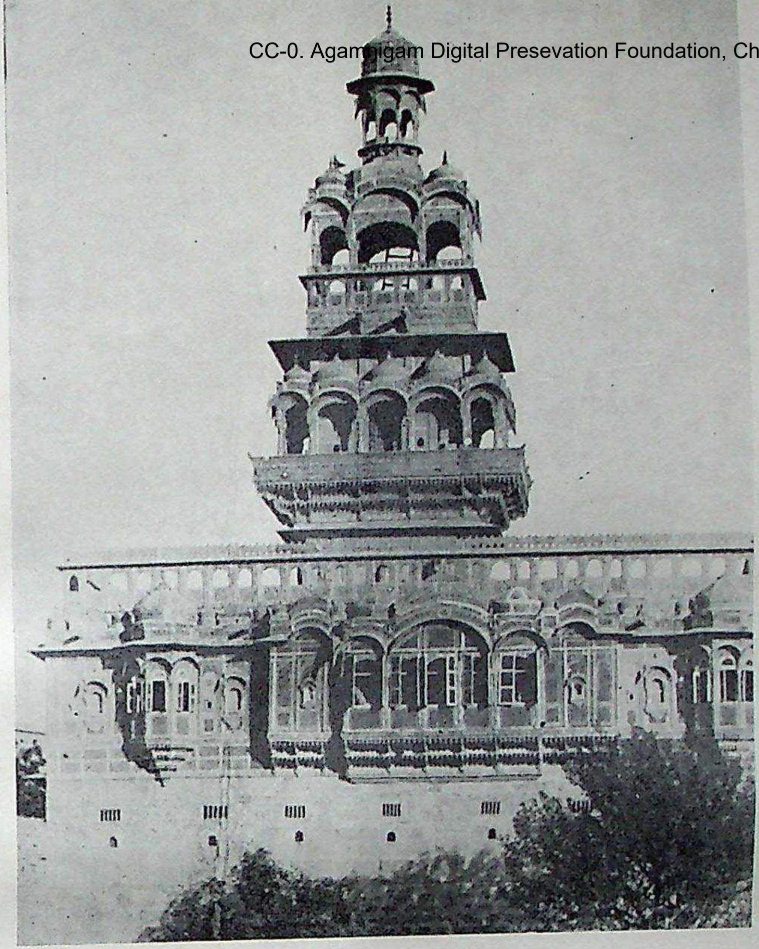
23. Closer view of the *jharokha* (Plate No. 22)



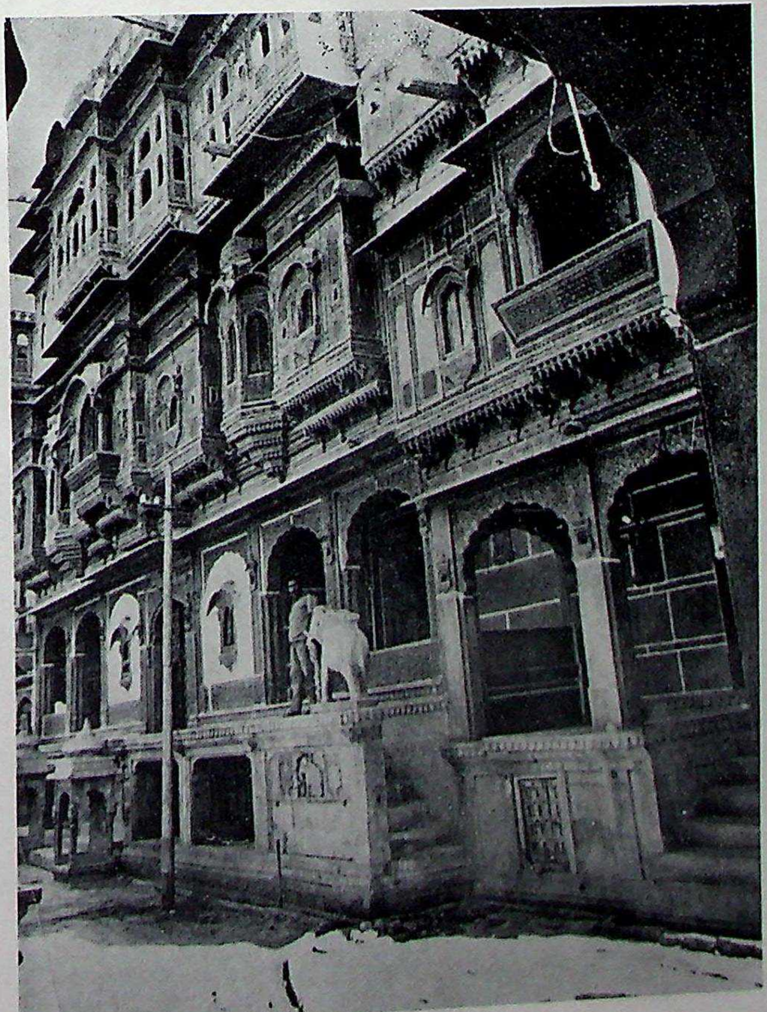
22. Faced of Jawahar-vilas.



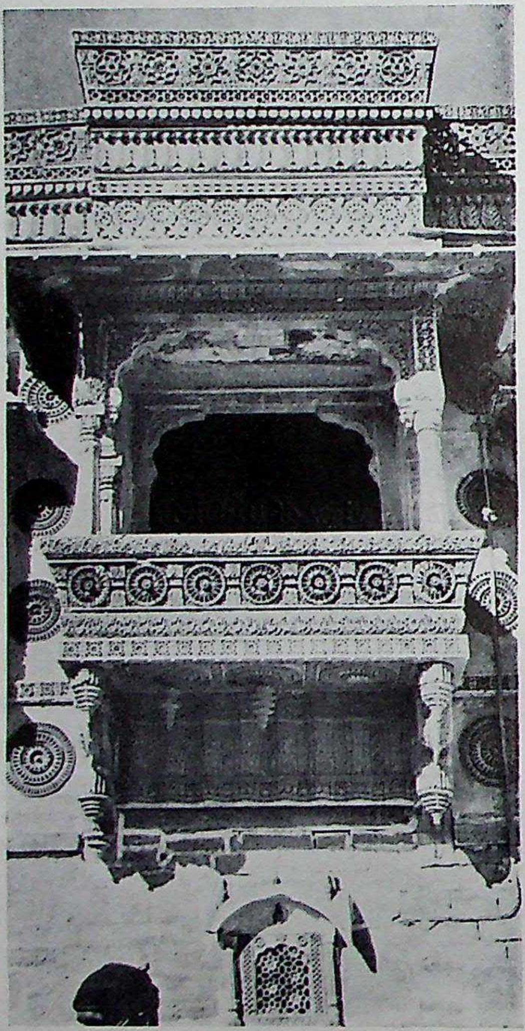
24. A view of Badalvilas.



25. A view of Badalvilas.

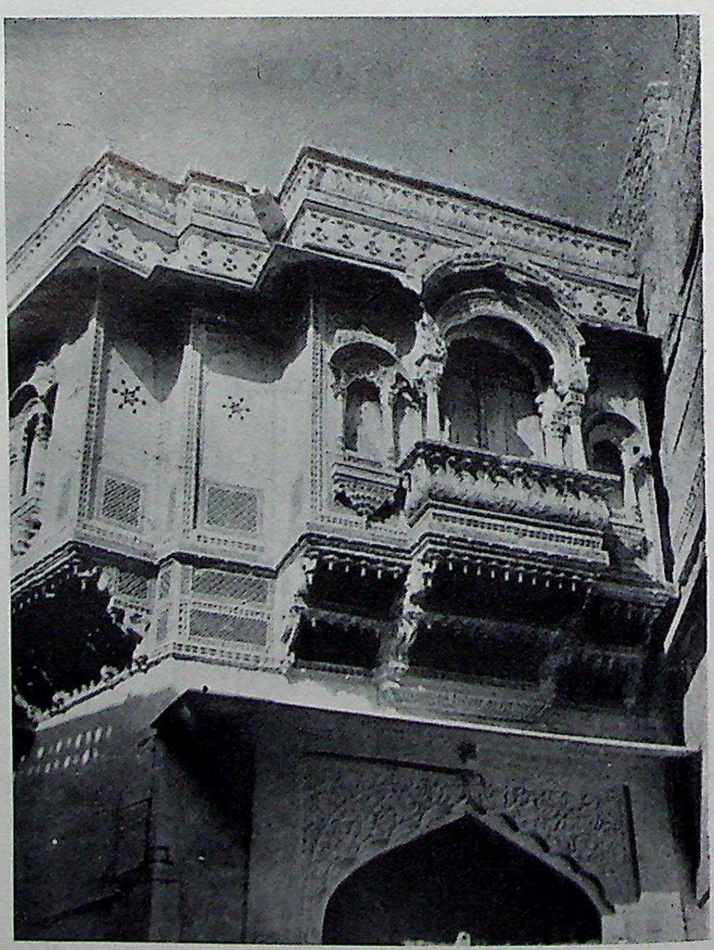


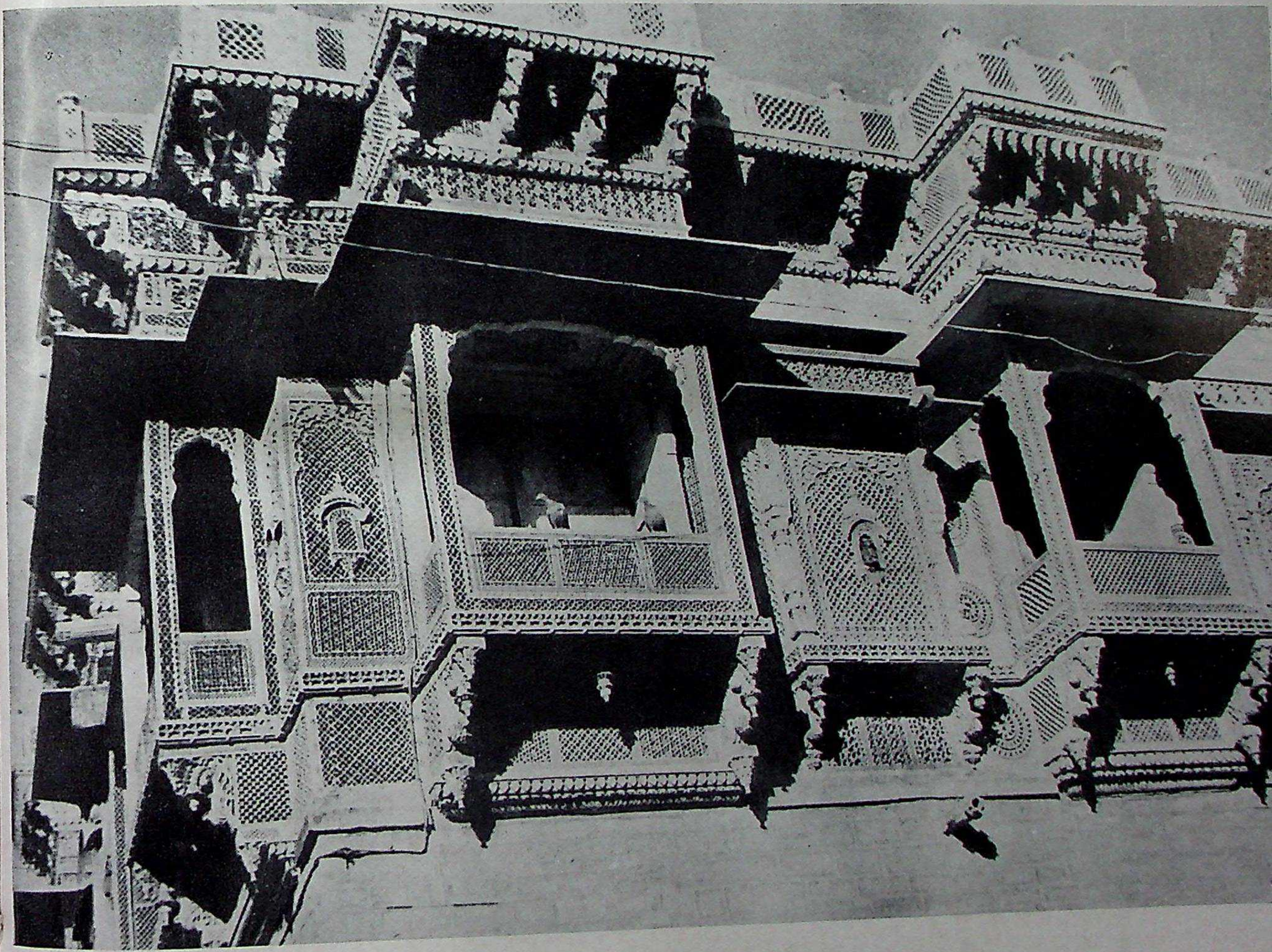
26. Facade of Divan Nathmal's *haveli*.



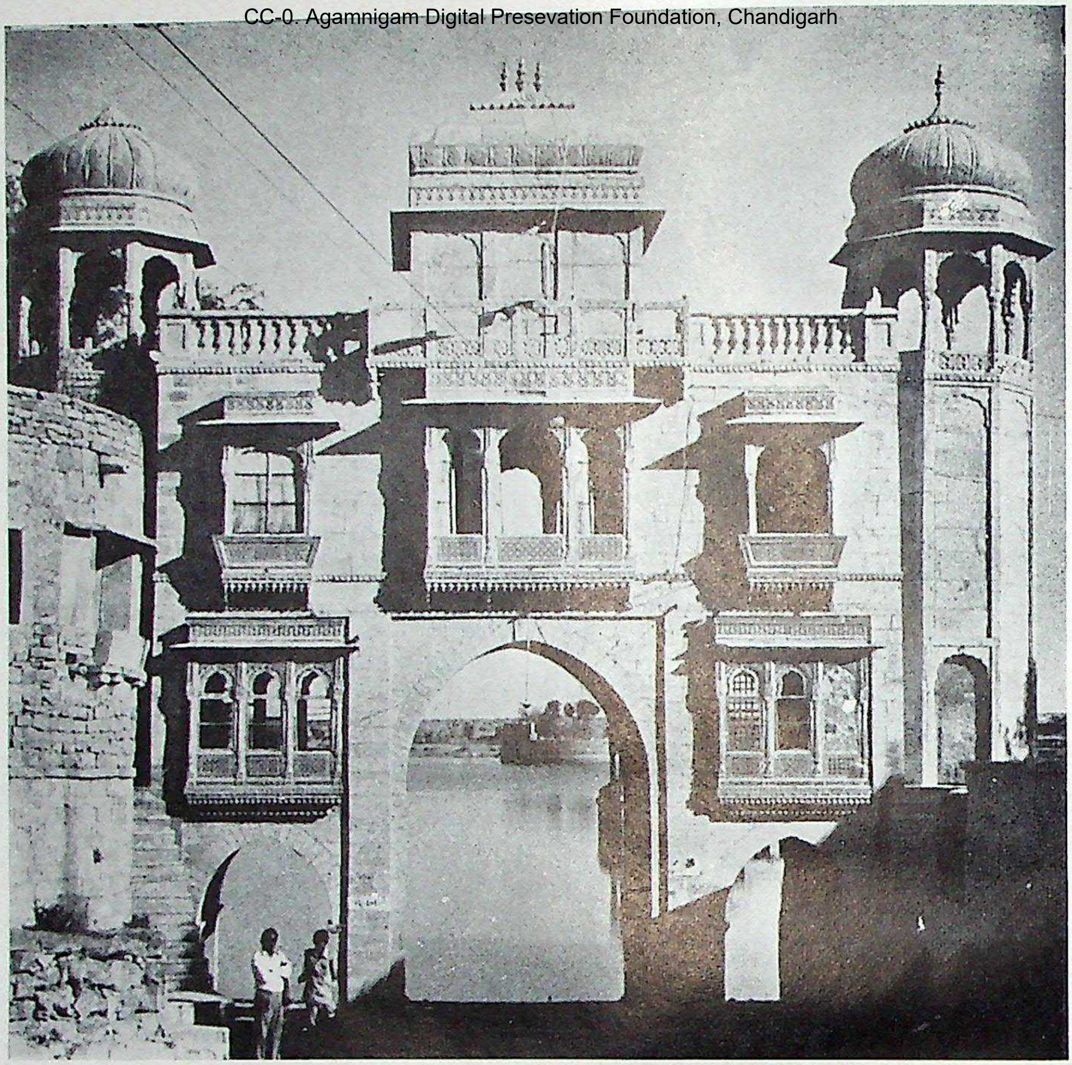
28. A decorate *jharokha*, Ranvir Singh's *haveli* in fort.

27. Facade of a house.

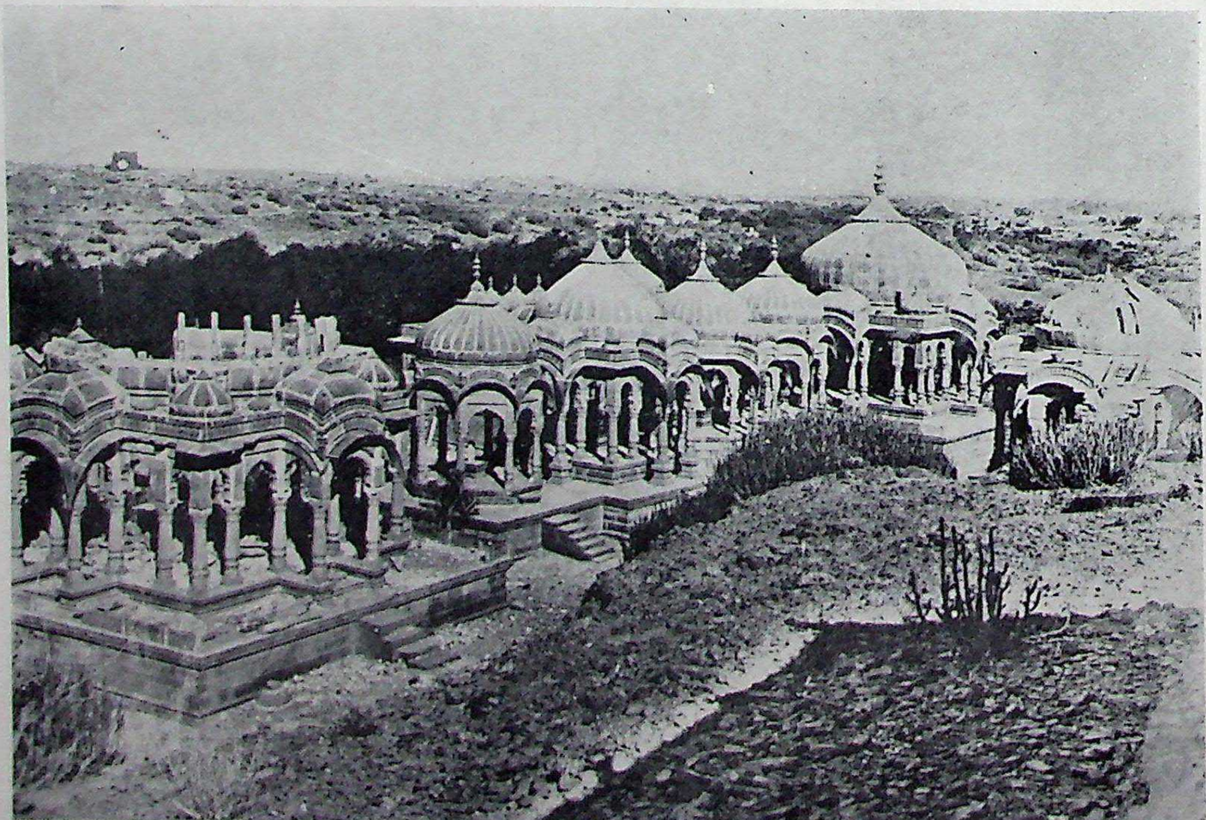


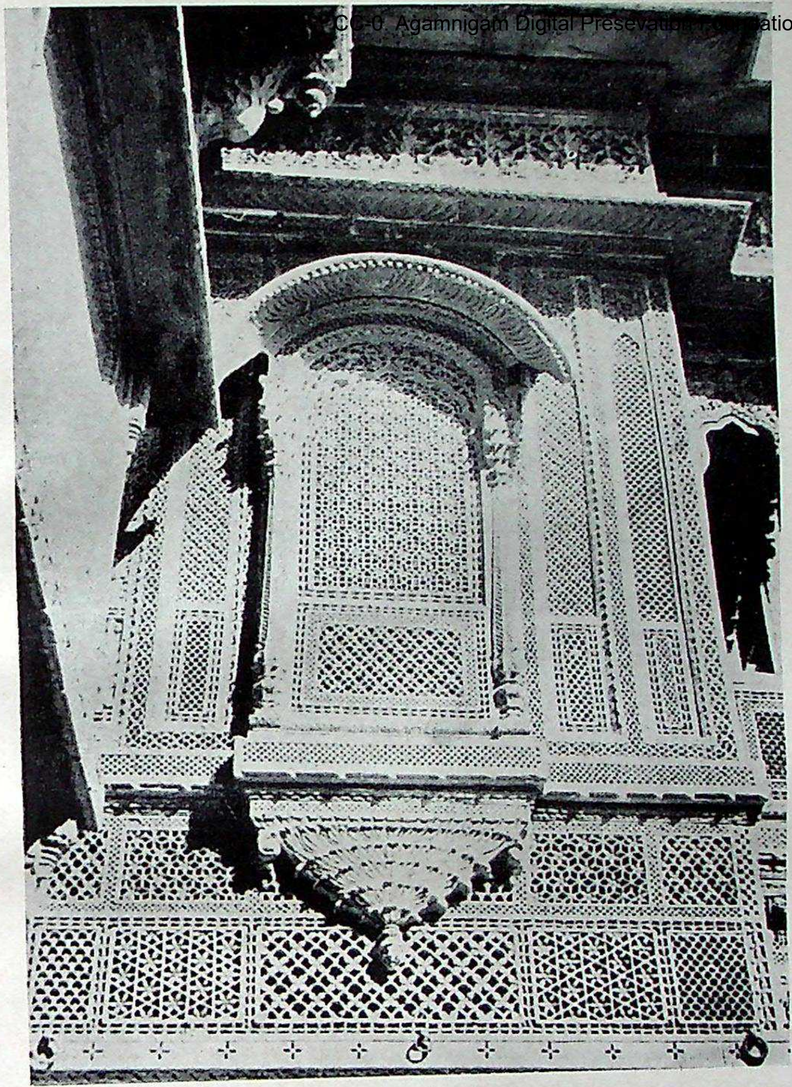


29. Front view of Asera house.

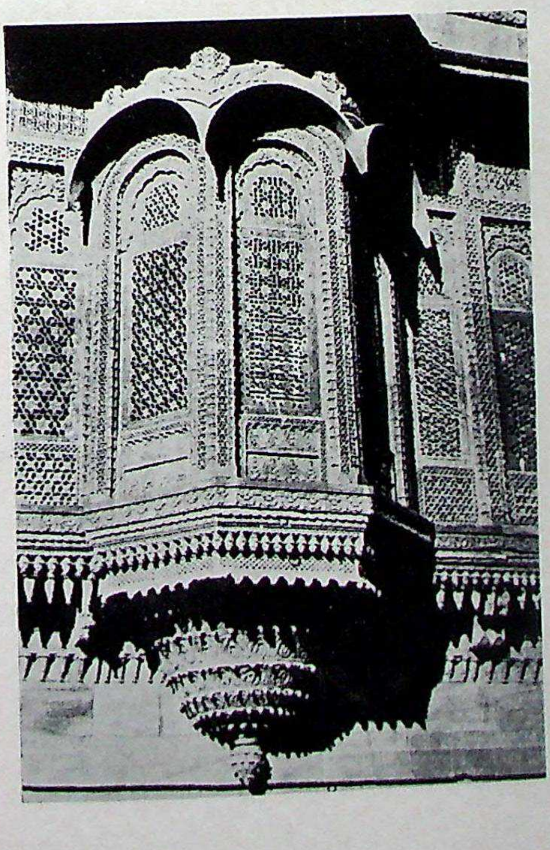


30. Gadsisar-*parol.*
31. Funeral *chhataris* in Badabag.

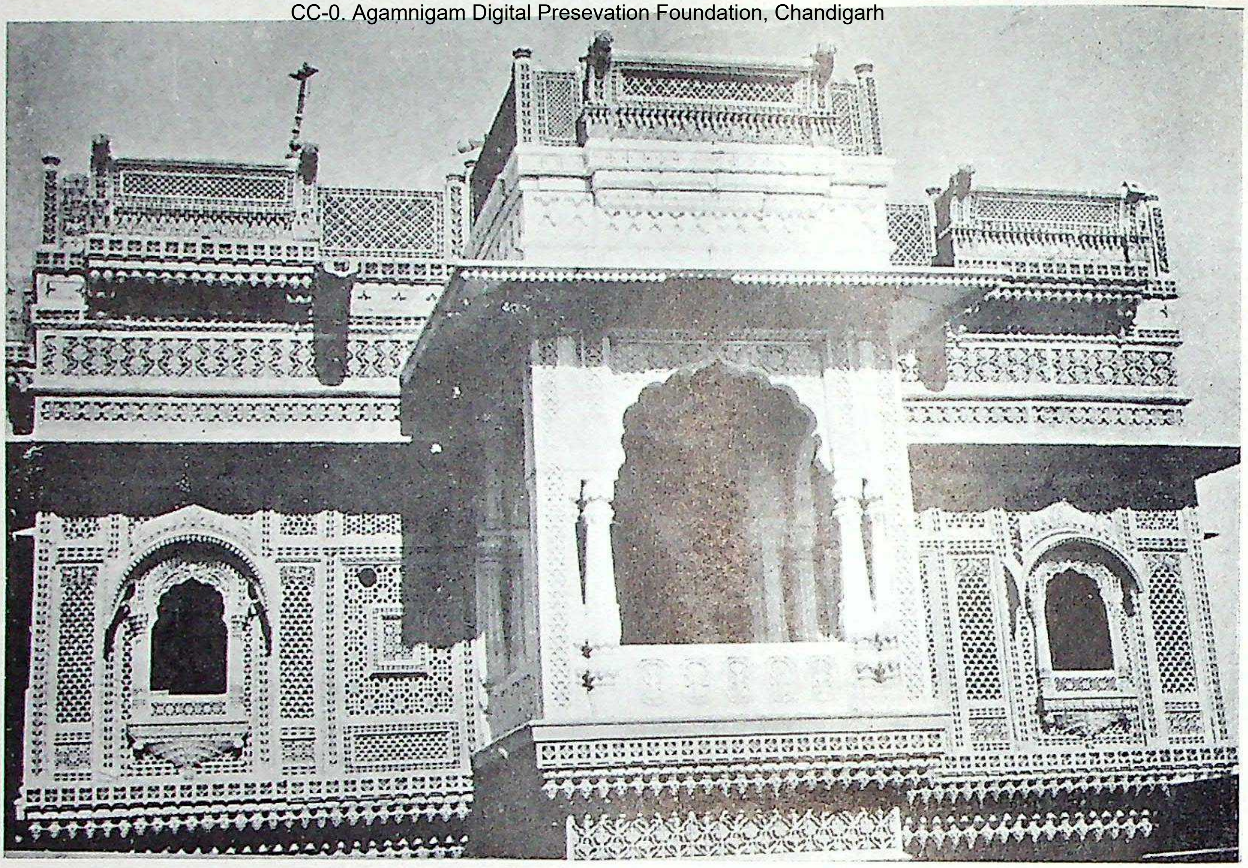




32. Display of stone cut-work on a side wall of a Patua-*haveli*.

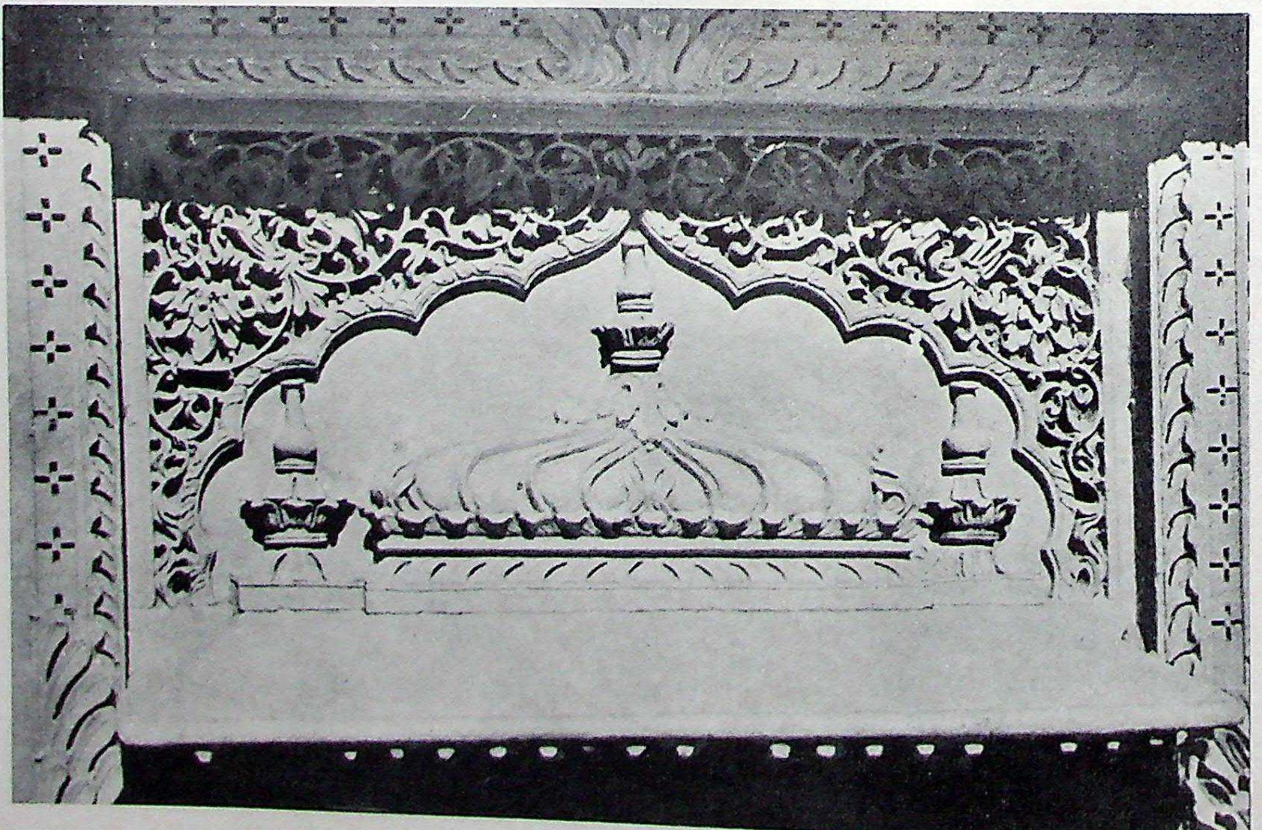


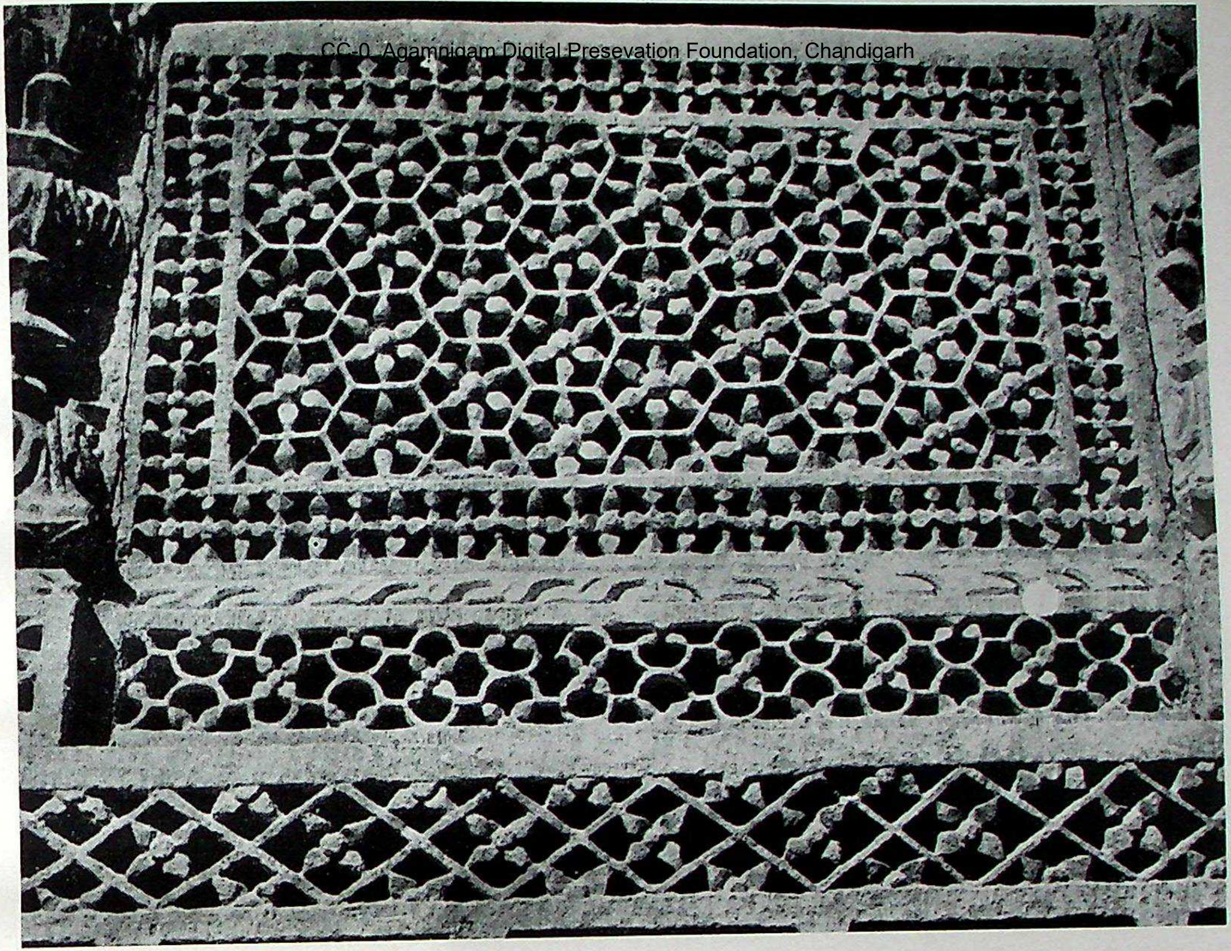
33. *Jali* work on a window, Jodhpur fort.



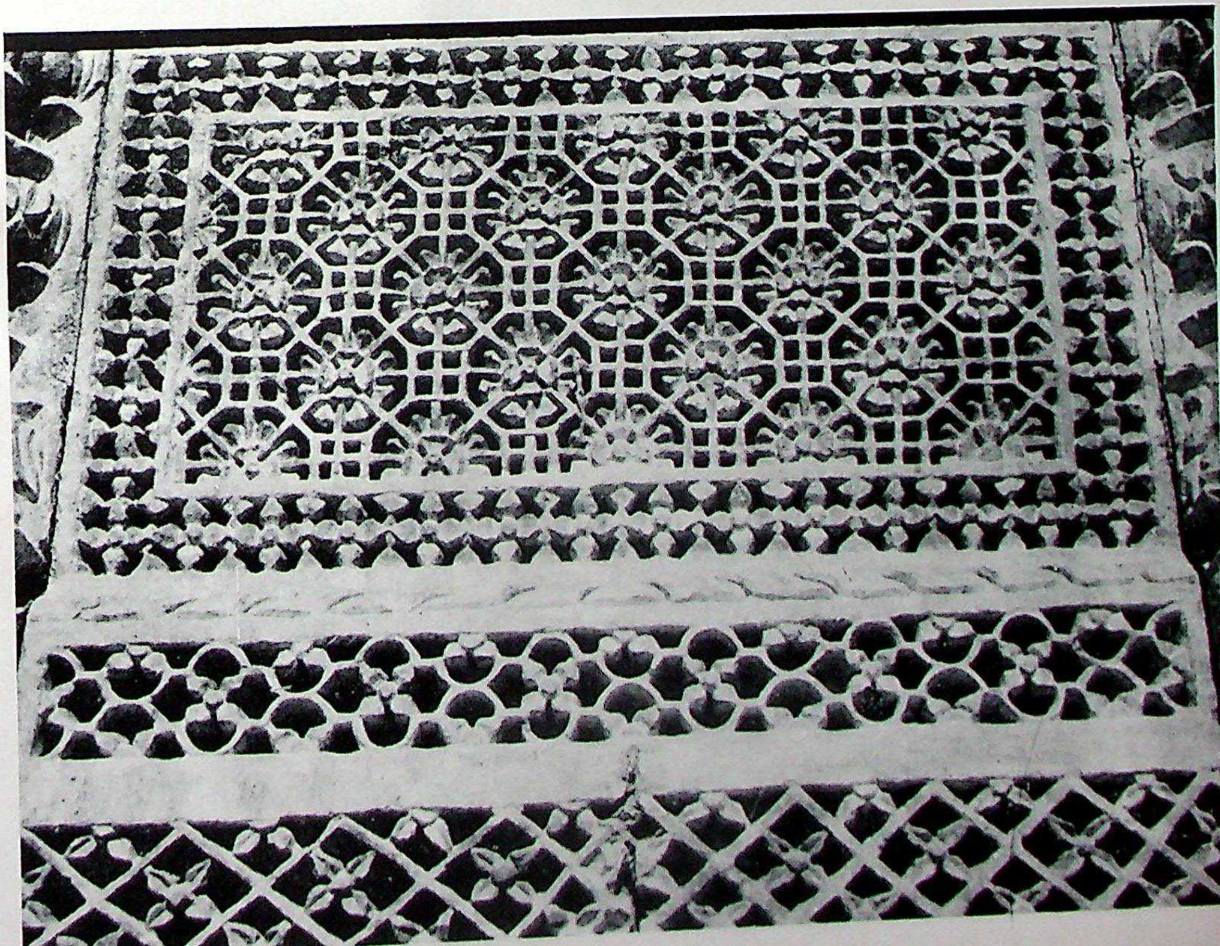
34. Upper facade of Seth Himmat Rai Jain temple at Amarsagar.

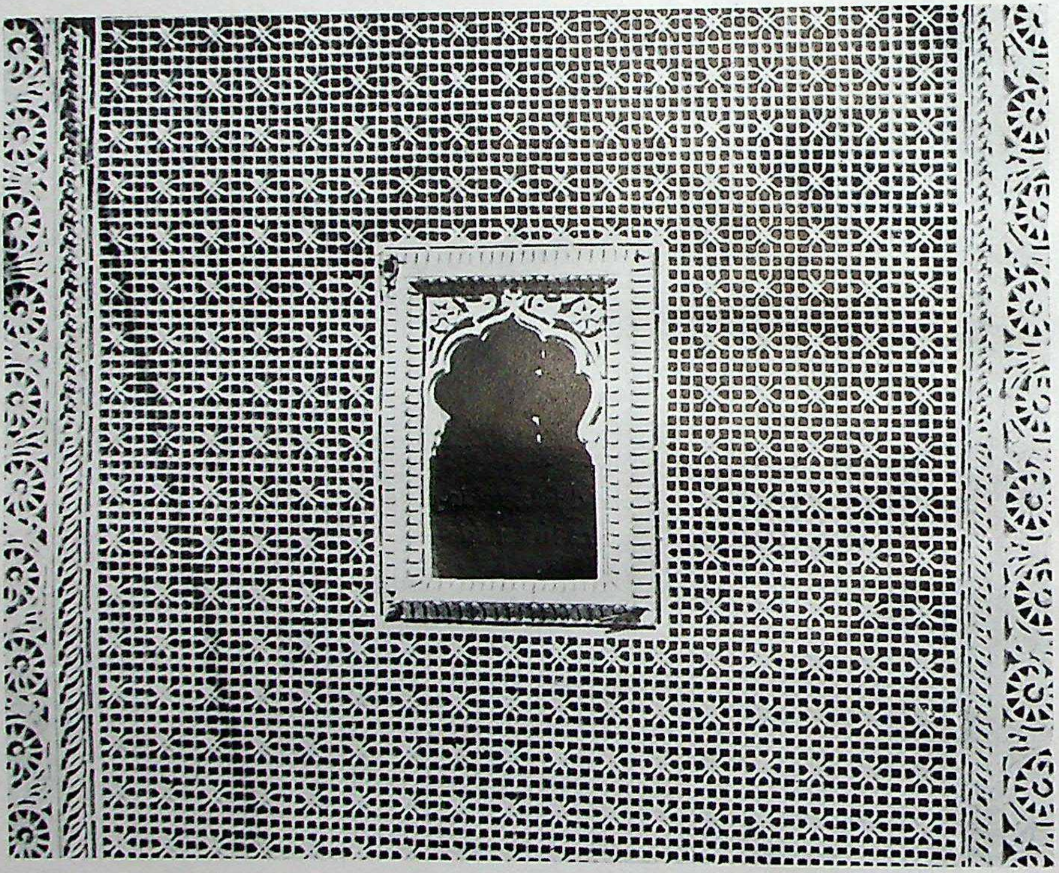
35. Decorative wall of Seth Himmat Rai Jain temple.



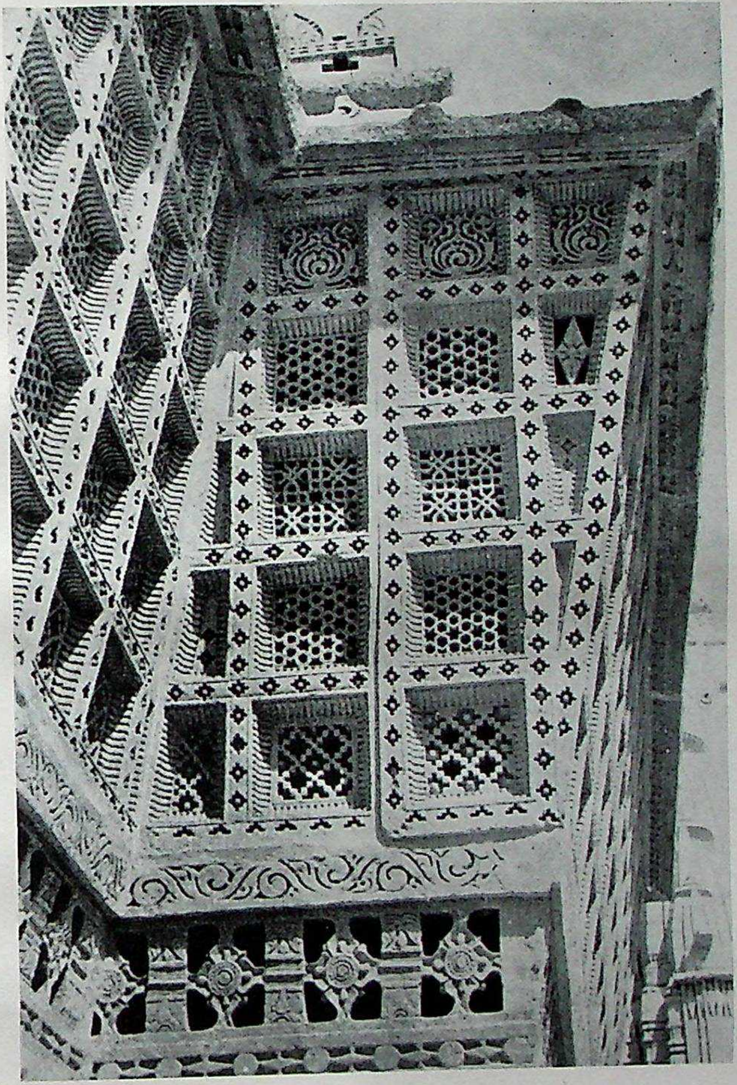


36. Hexagonal-spread in a *takia-panel*, Gadsisar-*parol*.
37. Octagonal-pattern in a *takia-panel*, Gadsisar-*parol*.



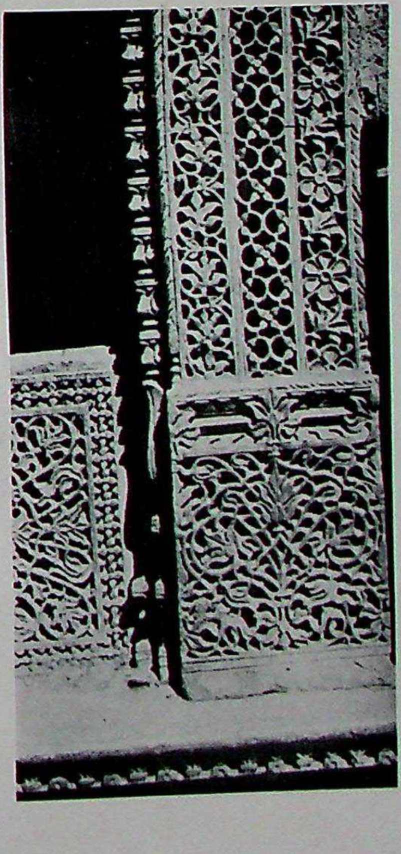


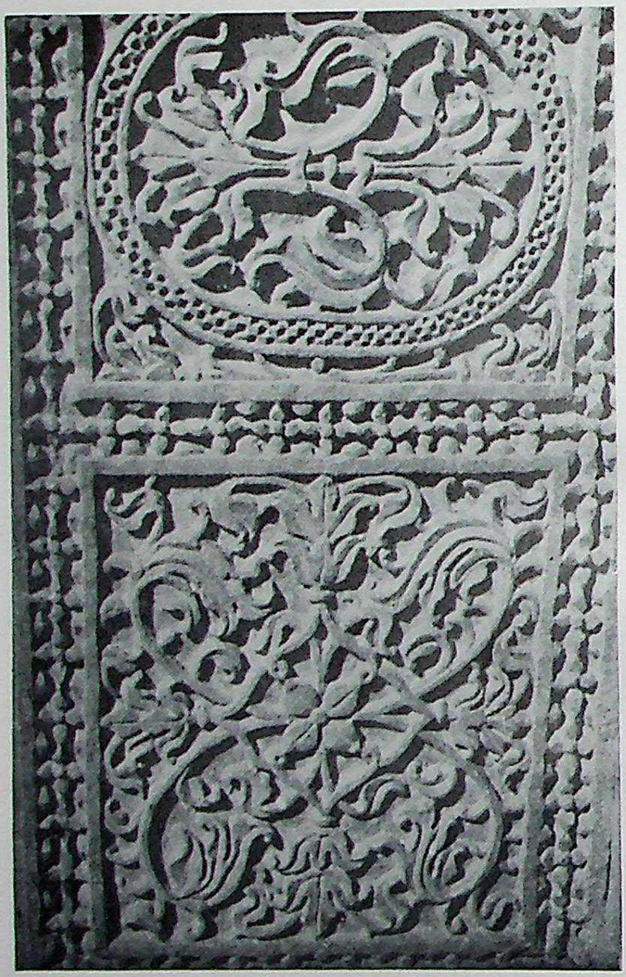
38. Close-up of a *bari* of a house in the fort.



39. Screen-panels in fencing-walls of Jain temple at Lodurva.

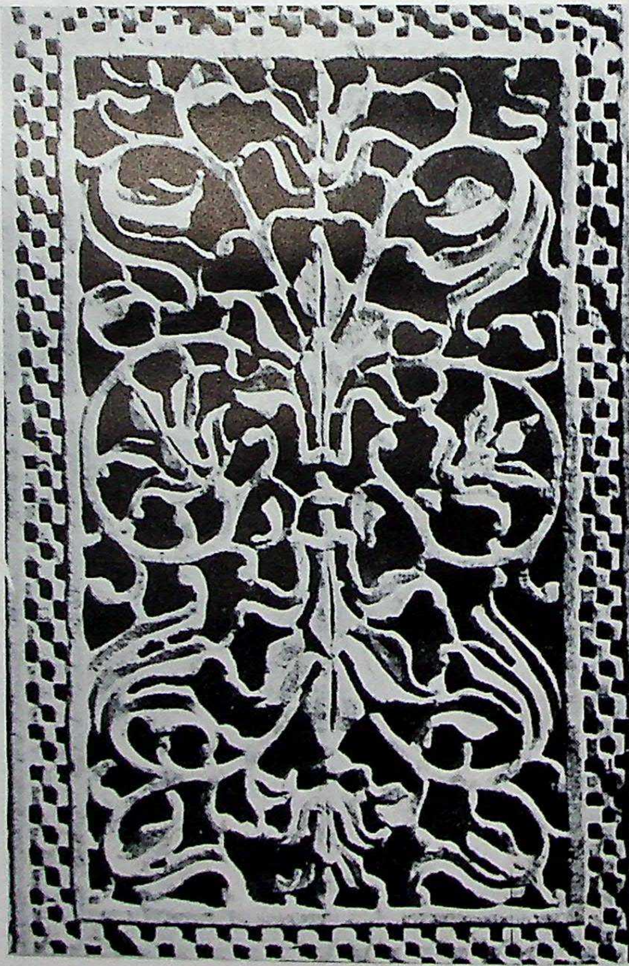
40. Floral carvings on a stone pillar.

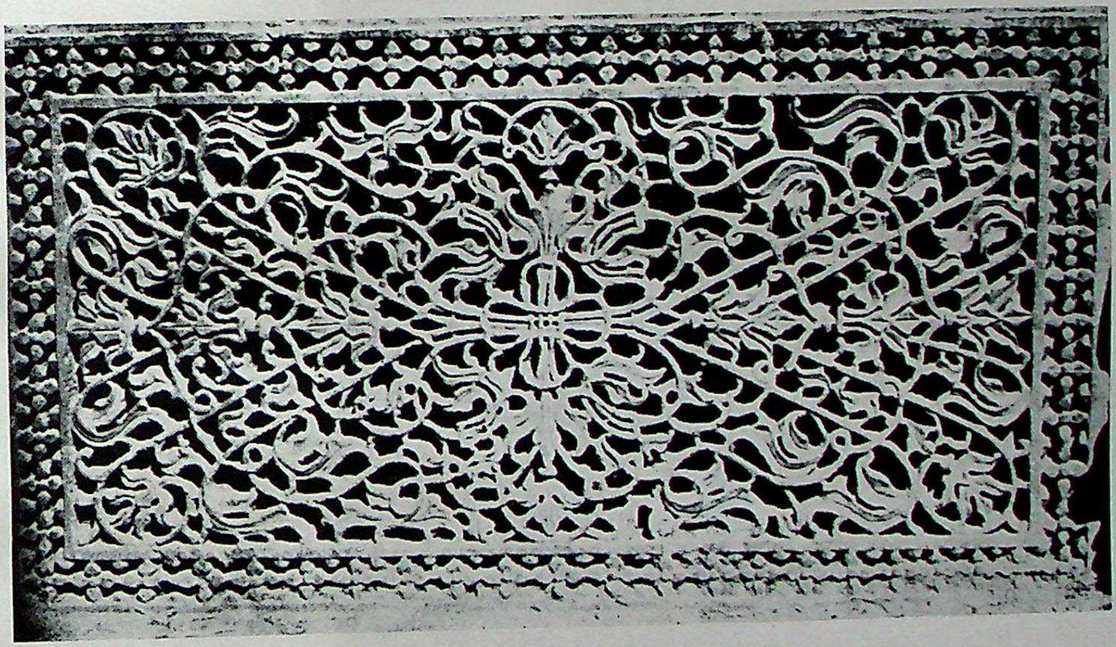




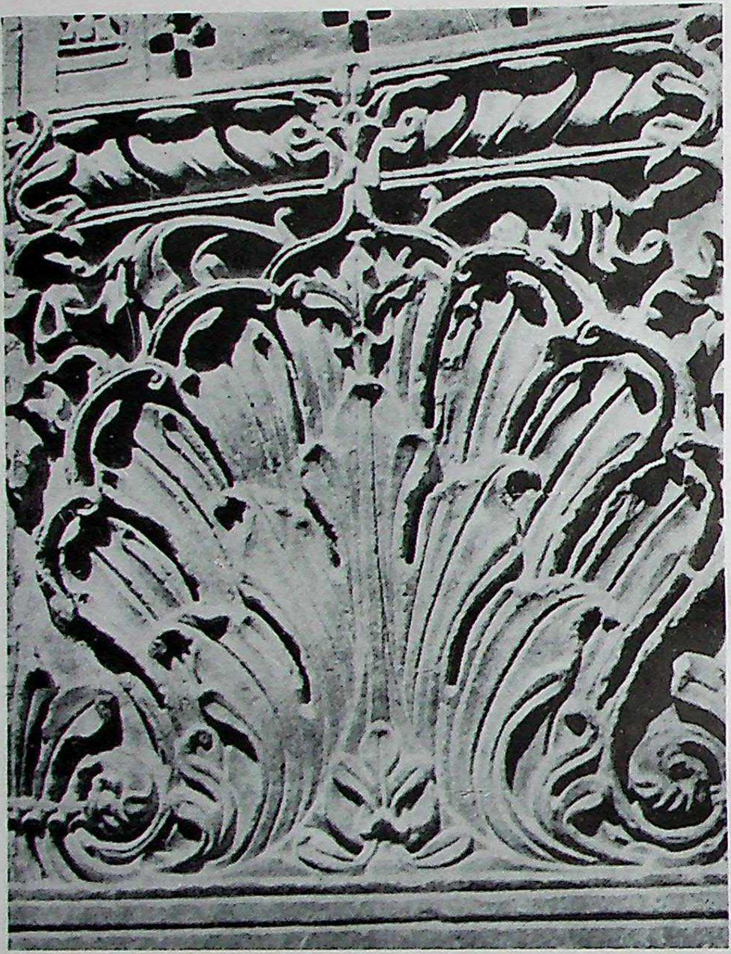
41. A decorative piece.

42. Foliated scrolls on a stone pillar.



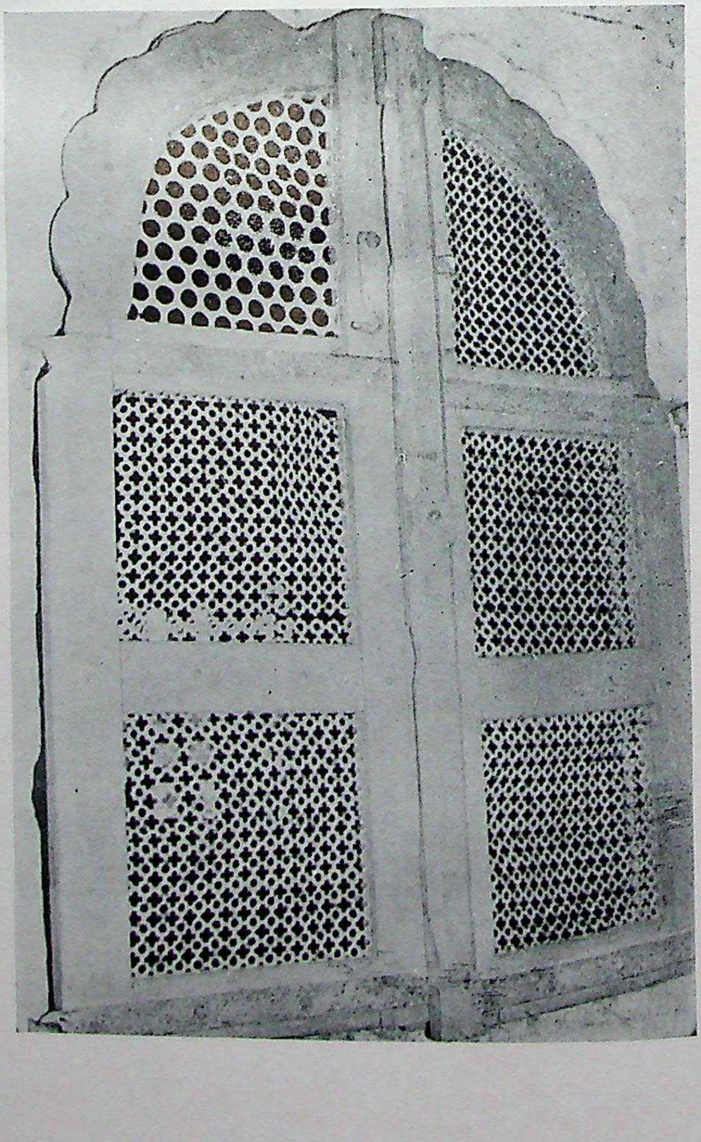


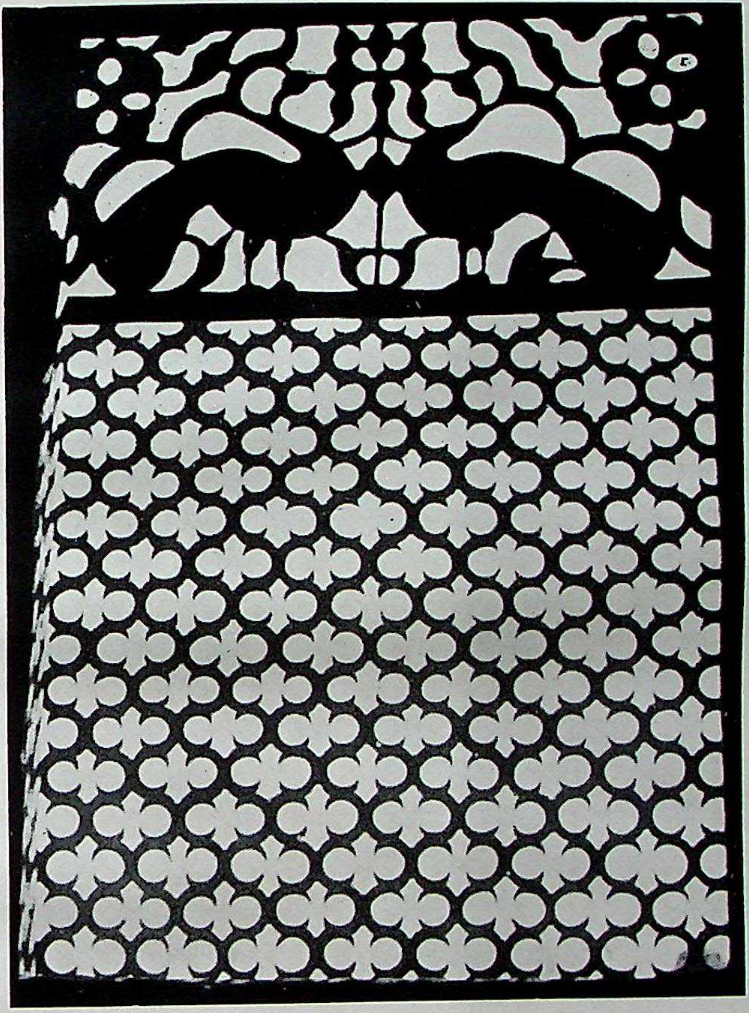
43. Arabesque carved on a *takiya*-panel.



44. Decorative base of a pillar.

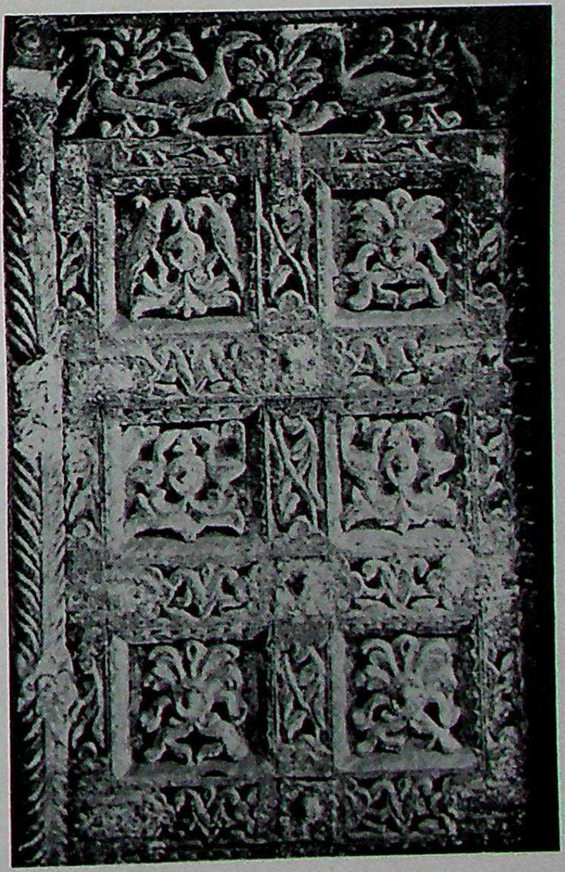
45. Perforated metal *jali*, Diwan Nathmal's *haveli*.

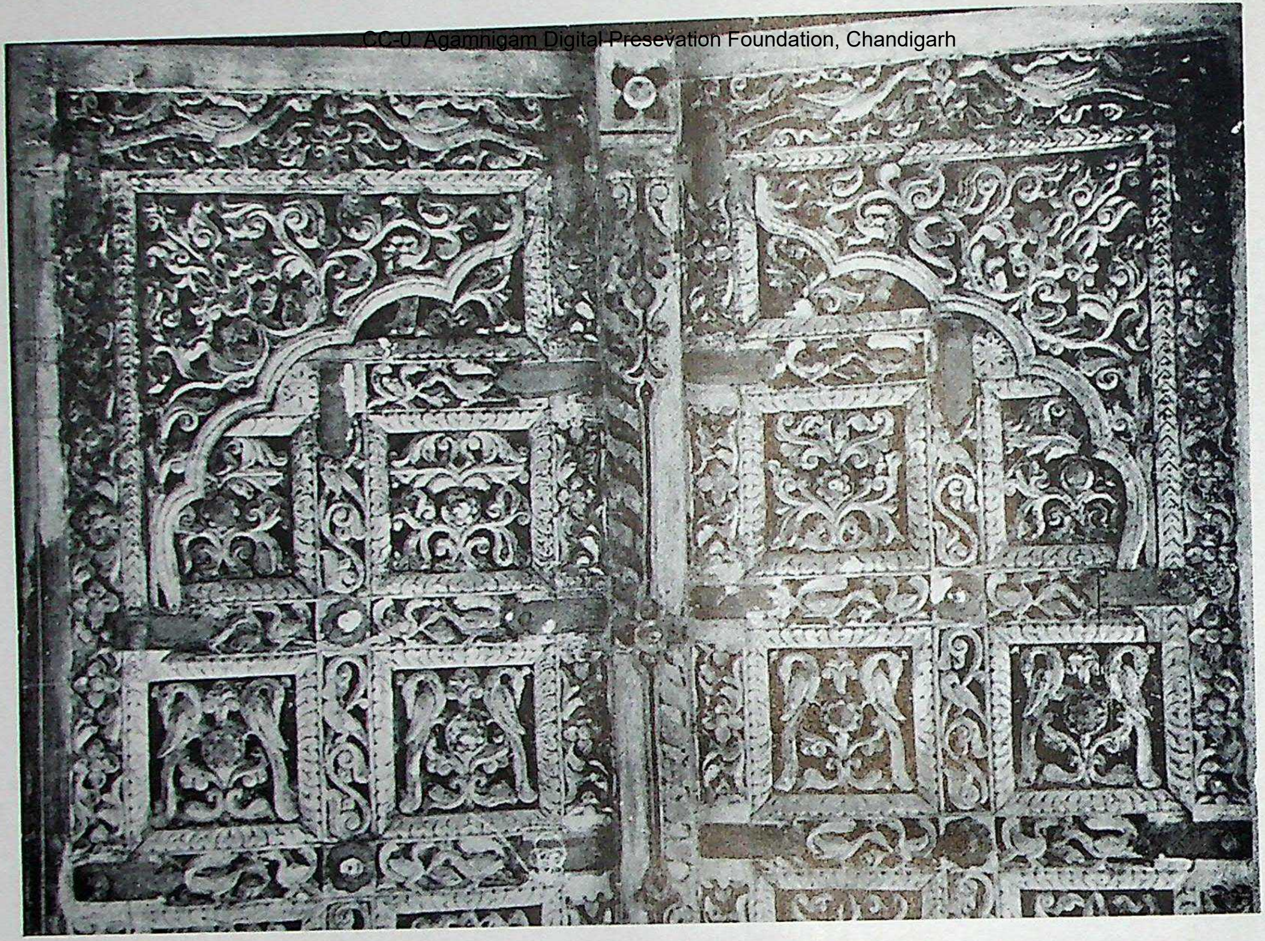




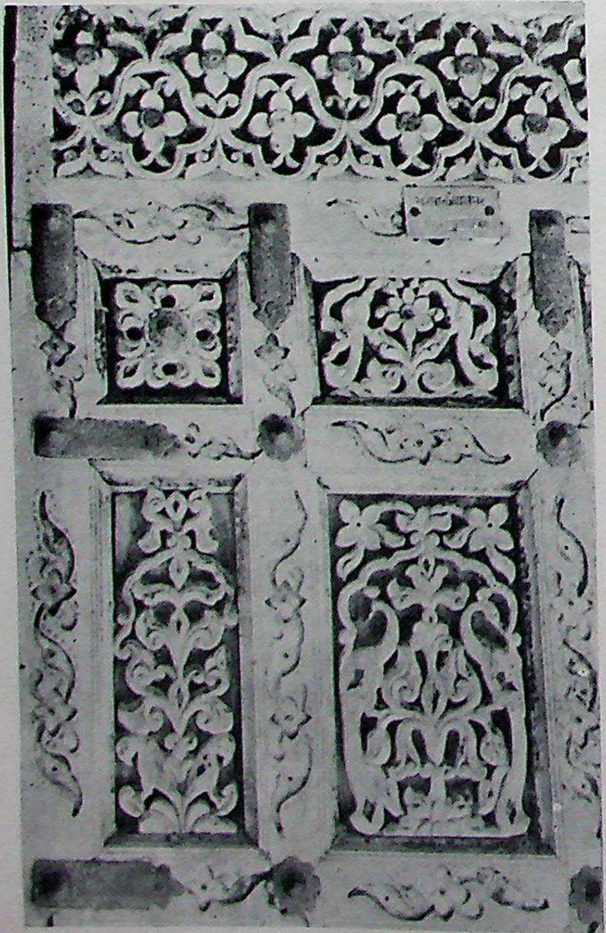
46. Cutwork on a metal sheet, Patua-*haveli*.

47. Ornamental carvings on wooden doors Patua-*haveli*.

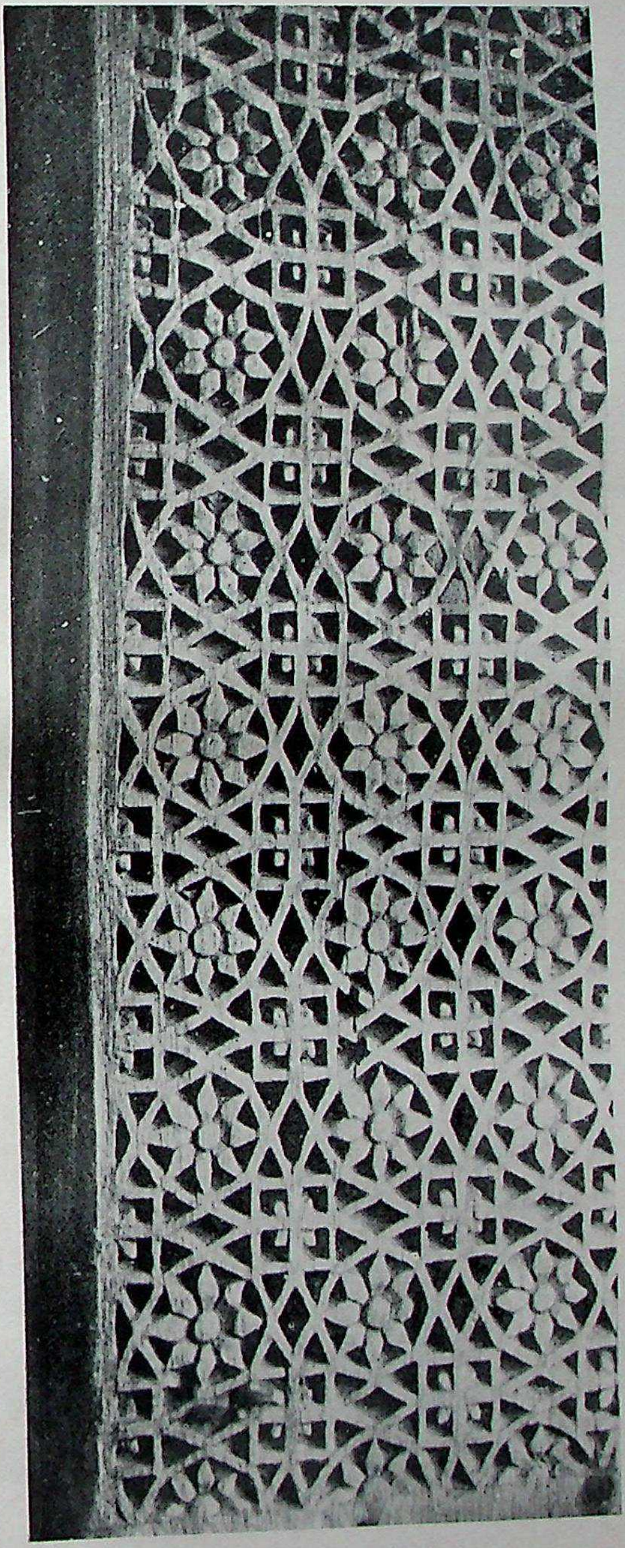




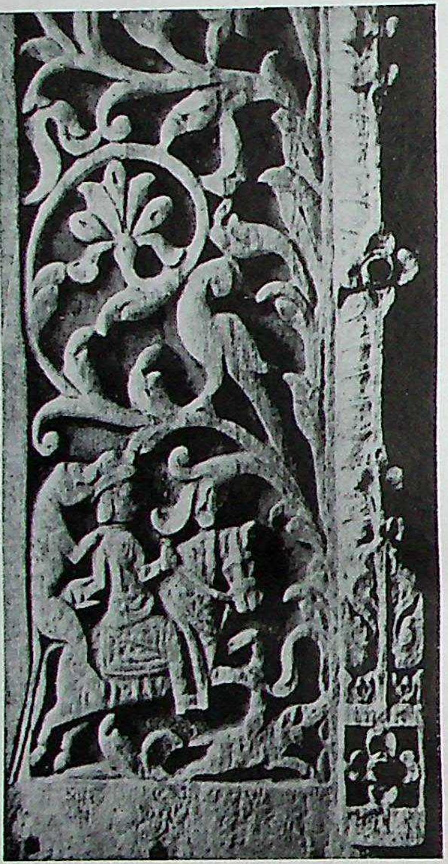
48. Decorated door-cage from a *haveli* of Patua.



49. Floral design on a wooden door, Patua-*haveli*.

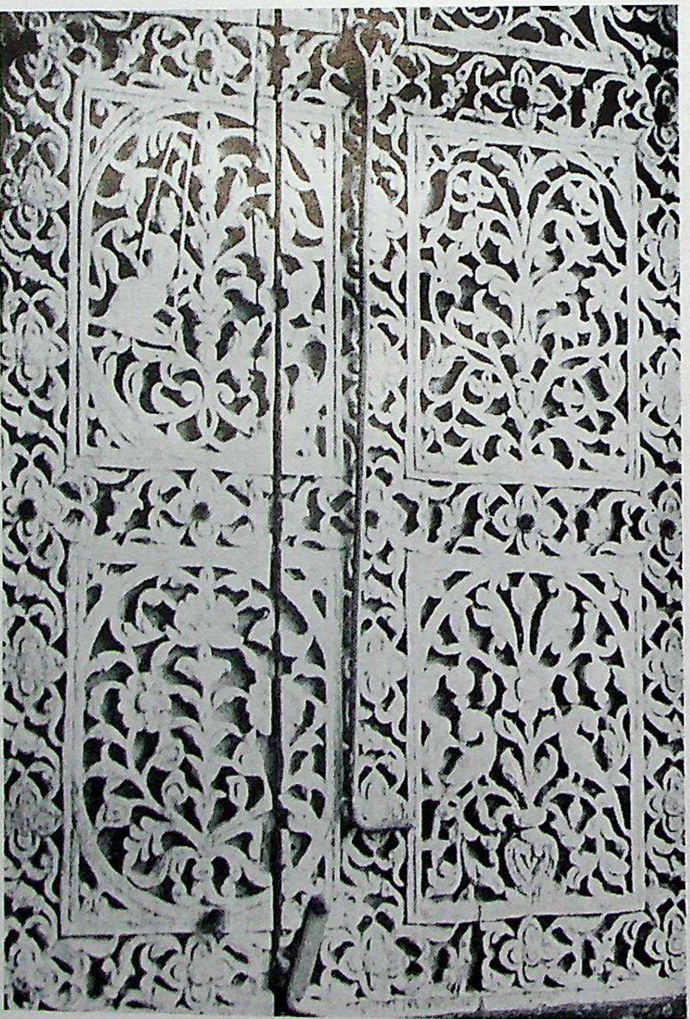


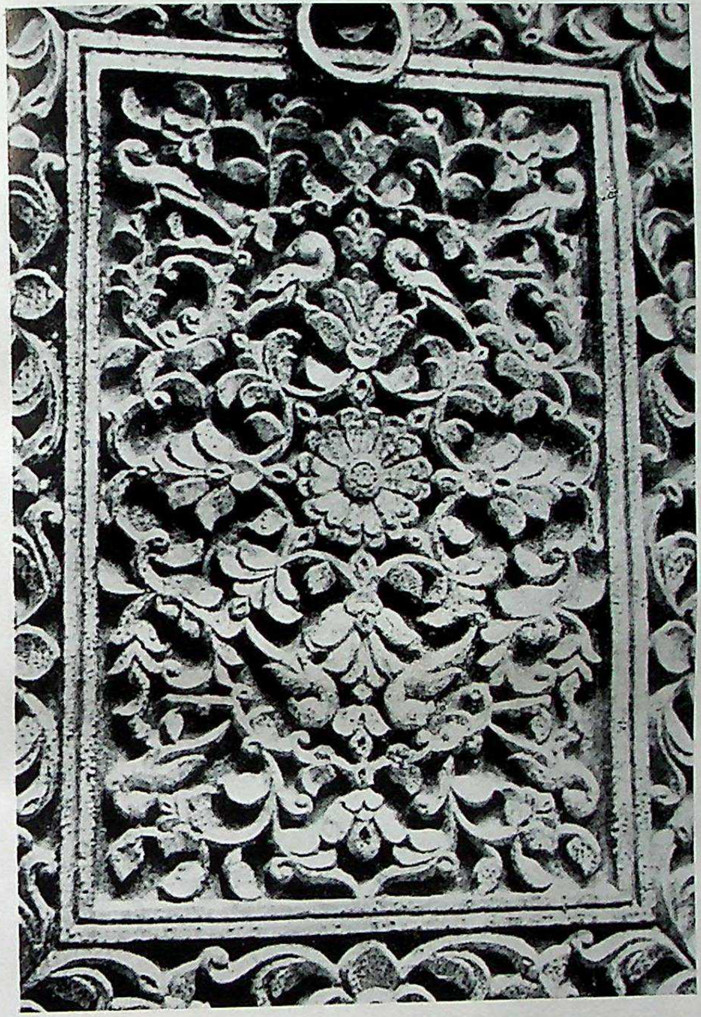
50. A geometric wooden engraving on the window-leaf, Diwan Nathmal's *haveli*.



51. Florol and faunal decoration on the window leaf Diwan Nathmal's *haveli*.

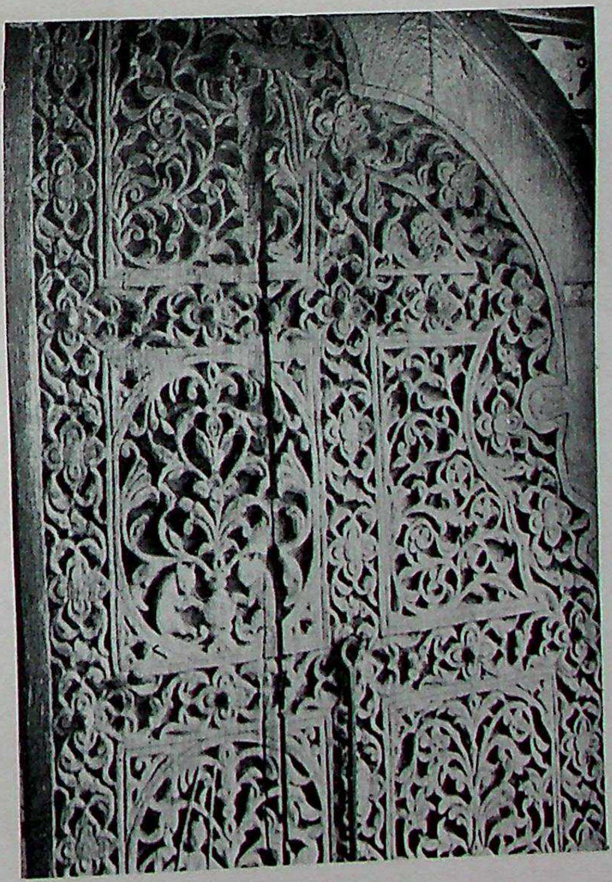
52. Foliated carvings on wood, Diwan Nathmal's *haveli*.

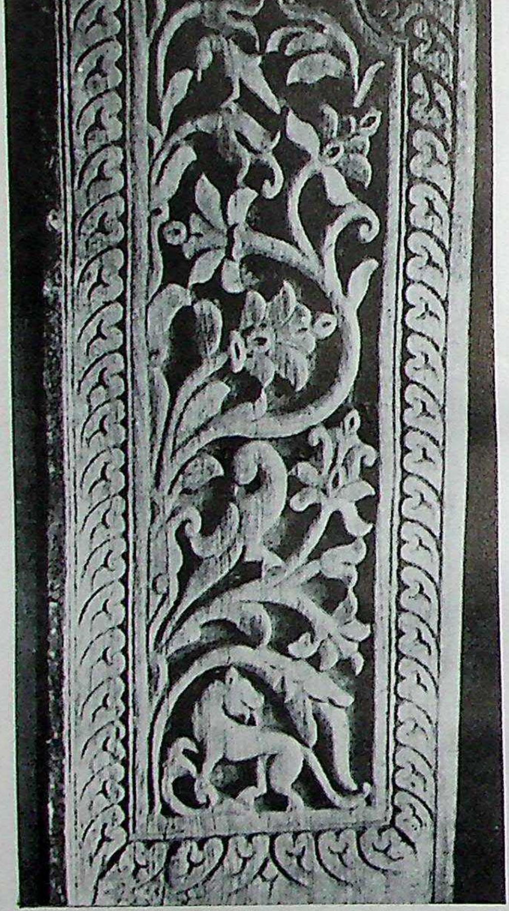




53. A floral pattern on wood, Diwan Nathmal's *haveli*.

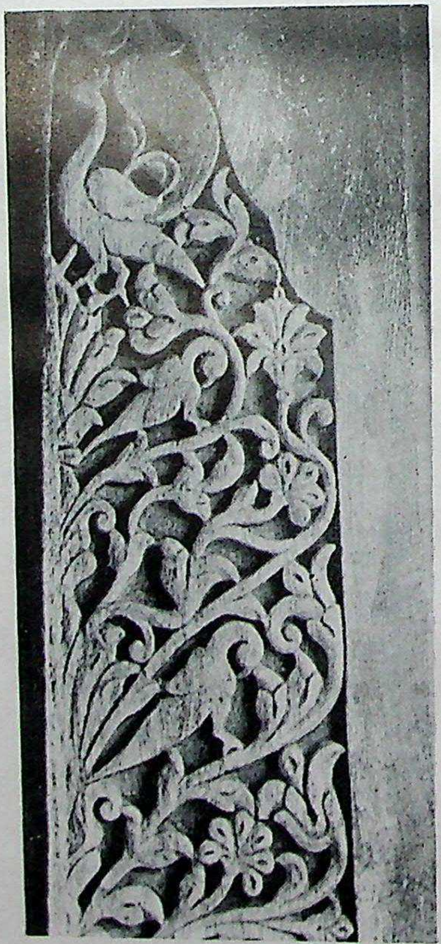
54. Wooden-carving on the window door leaf, Diwan Nathmal's *haveli*.

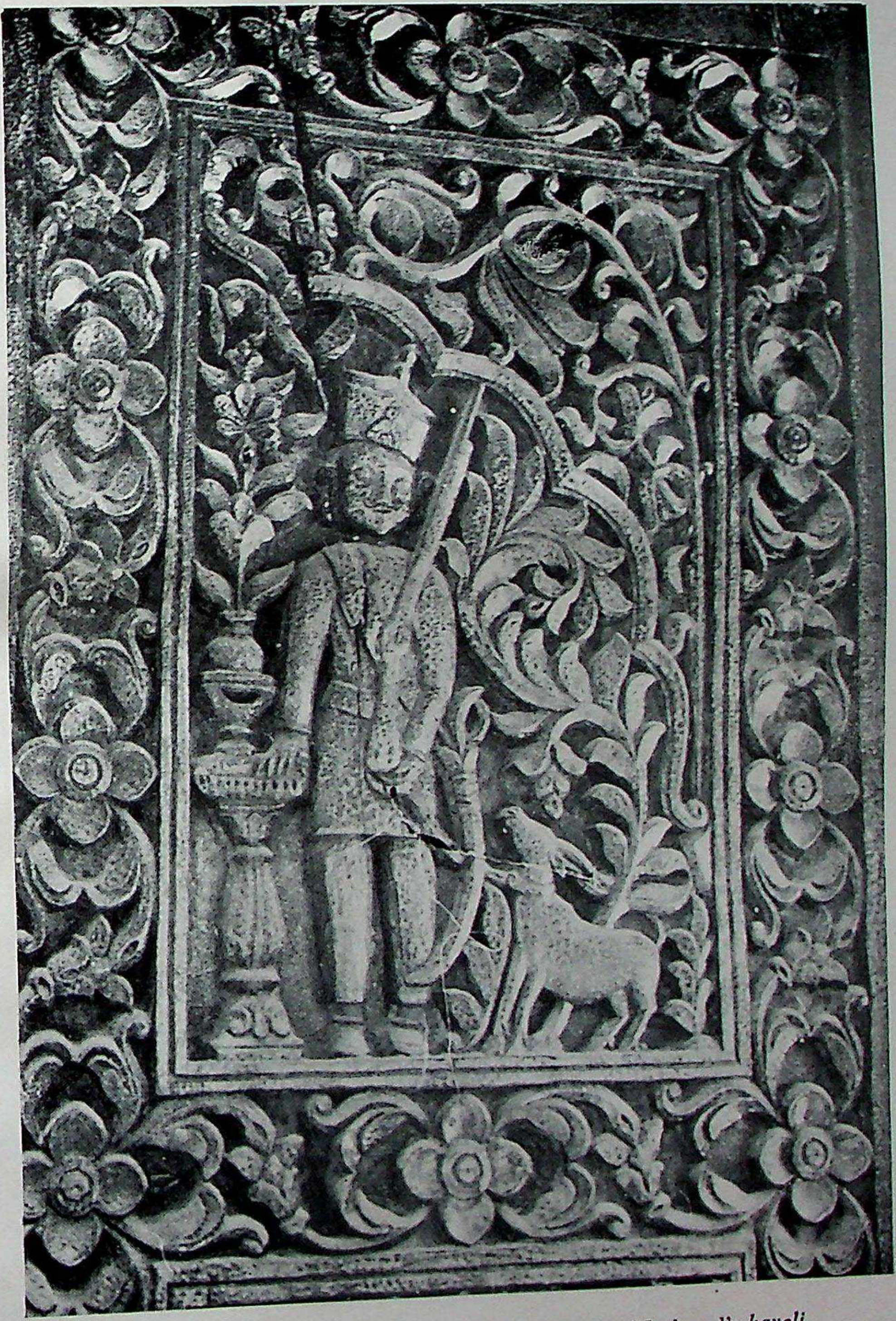




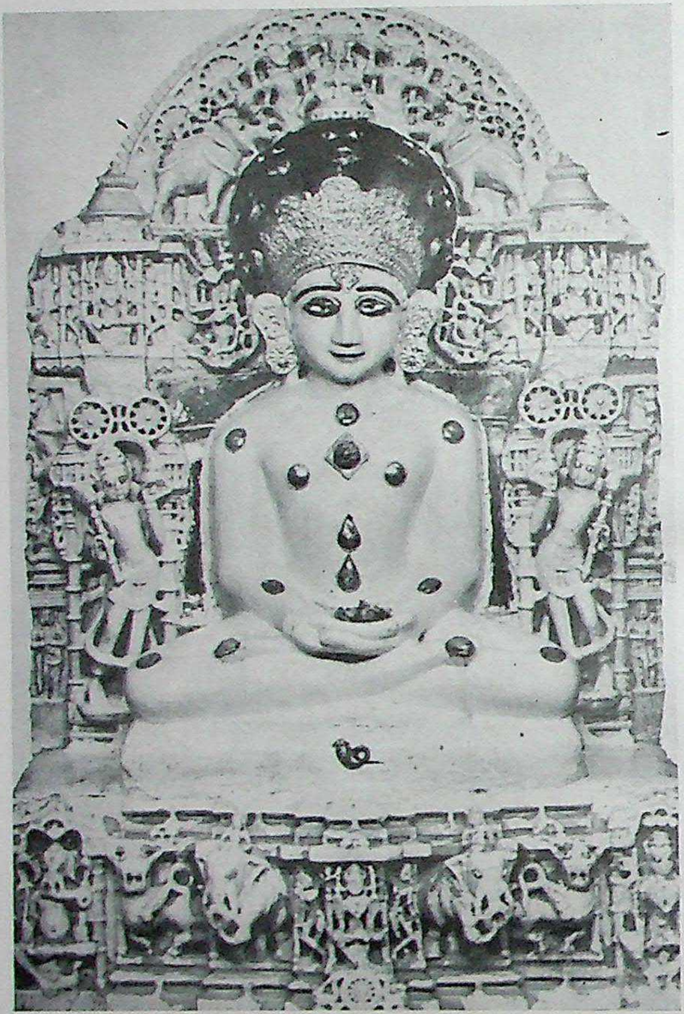
55. Wooden carving, Diwan Nathmal's *haveli.*

56. Wood-carving, Diwan Nathmal's *haveli.*



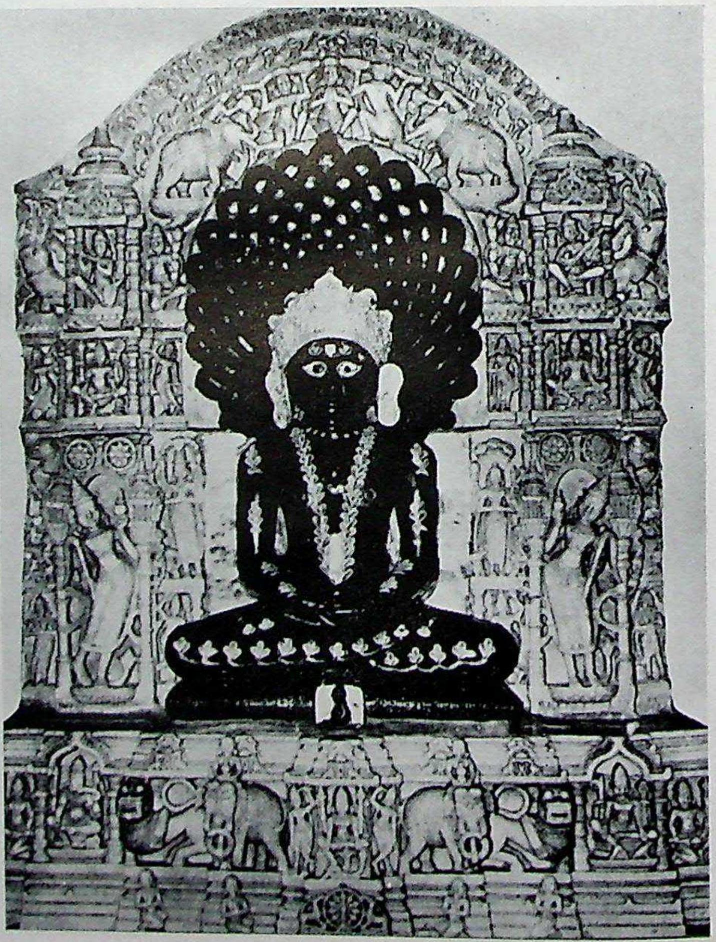


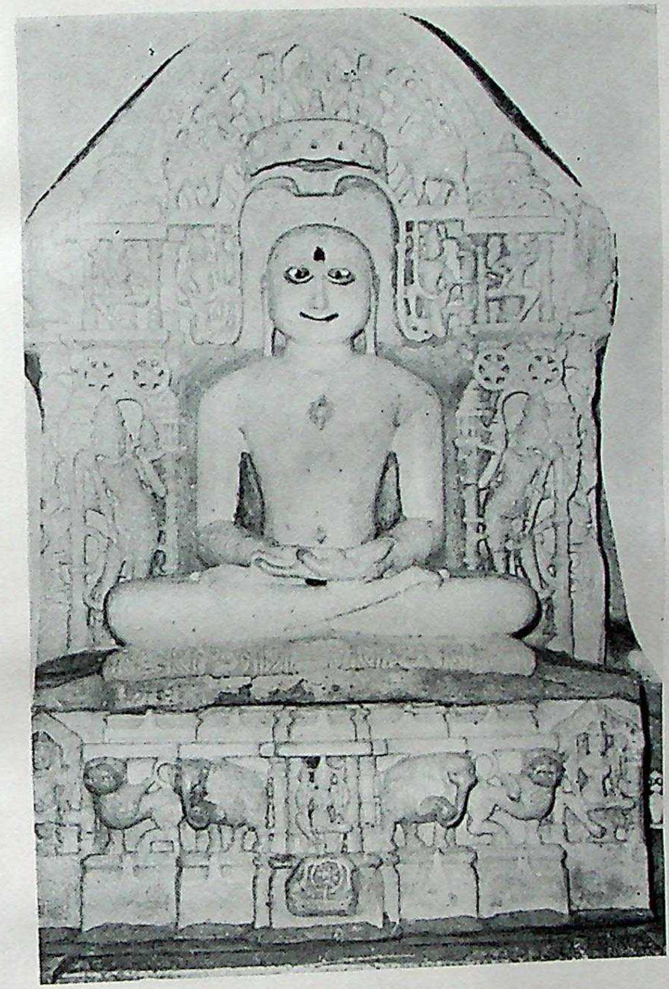
57. A sentry carved on a wooden door, Diwan Nathmal's *haveli*.



58. Mulanayak Shri Chintamani Parsvanatha in the fort temple.

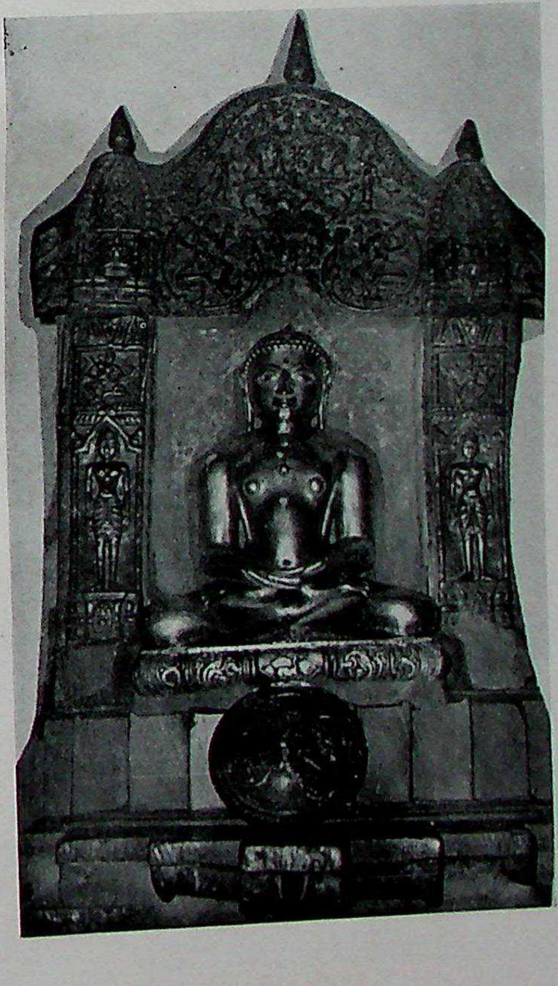
59. Main idol of Parsvanatha temple at Lodurva.

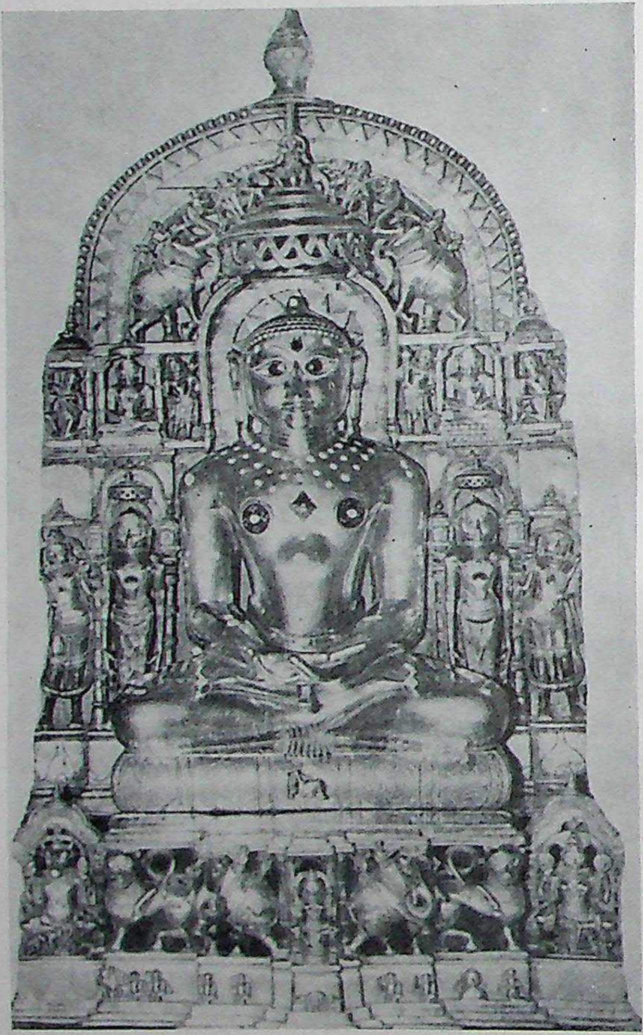




60. Image of *Tirthankara* Sambhavanathaji in the fort temple.

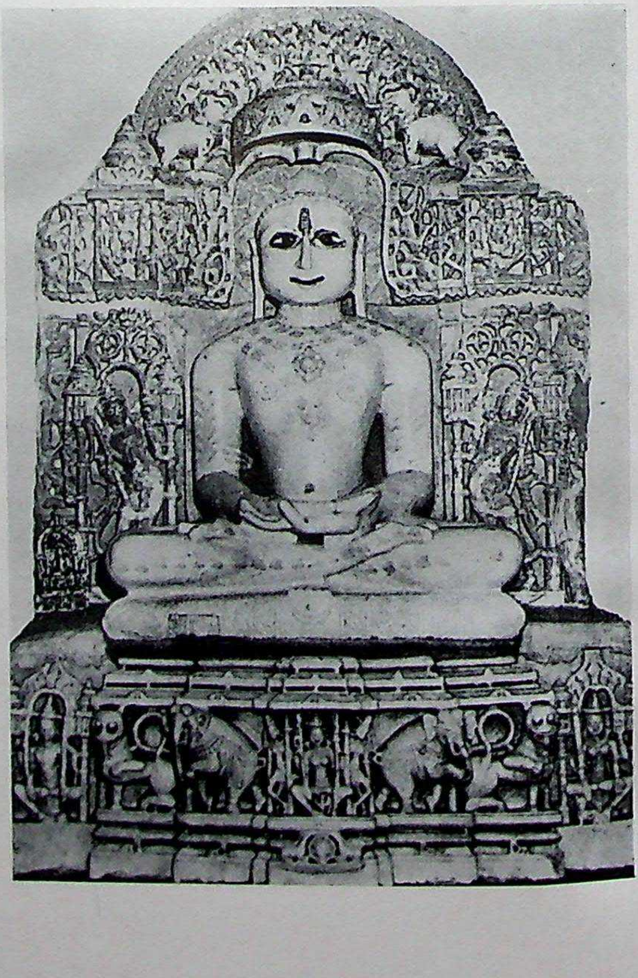
61. Shri Shitalnathaji

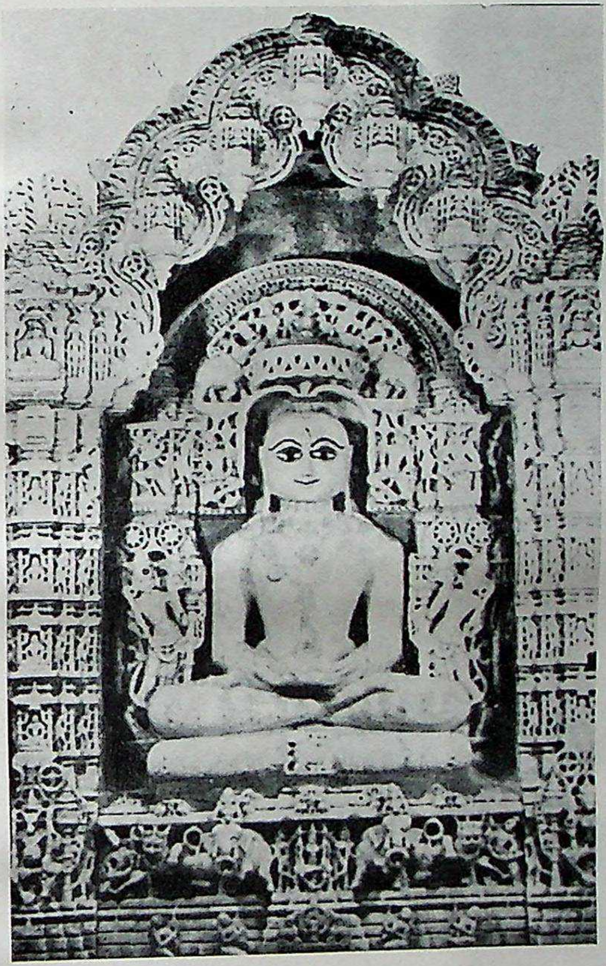




63. Image of Shri Chandraprabhuji.

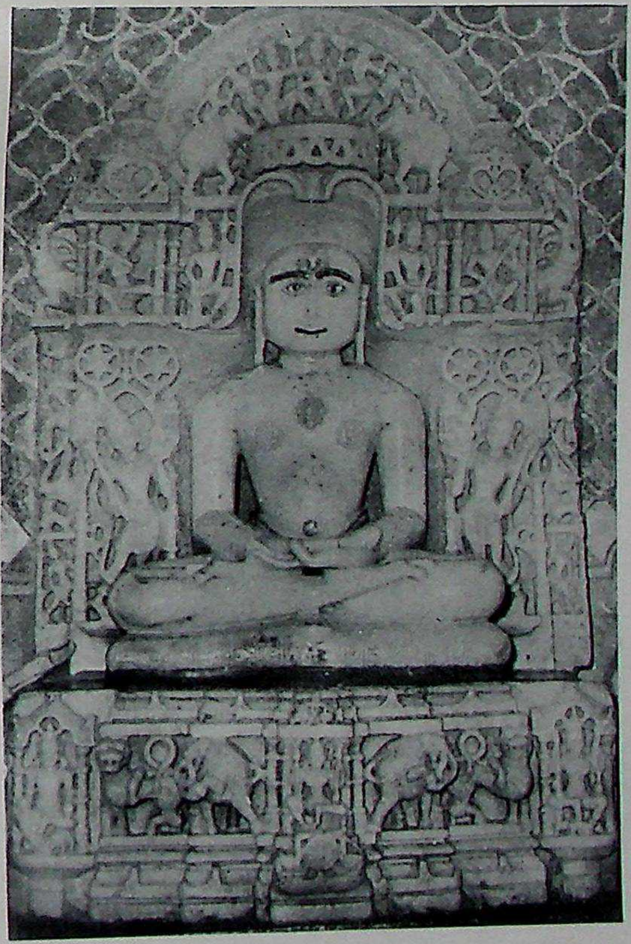
62. A metal image of Shri Shantinathaji.

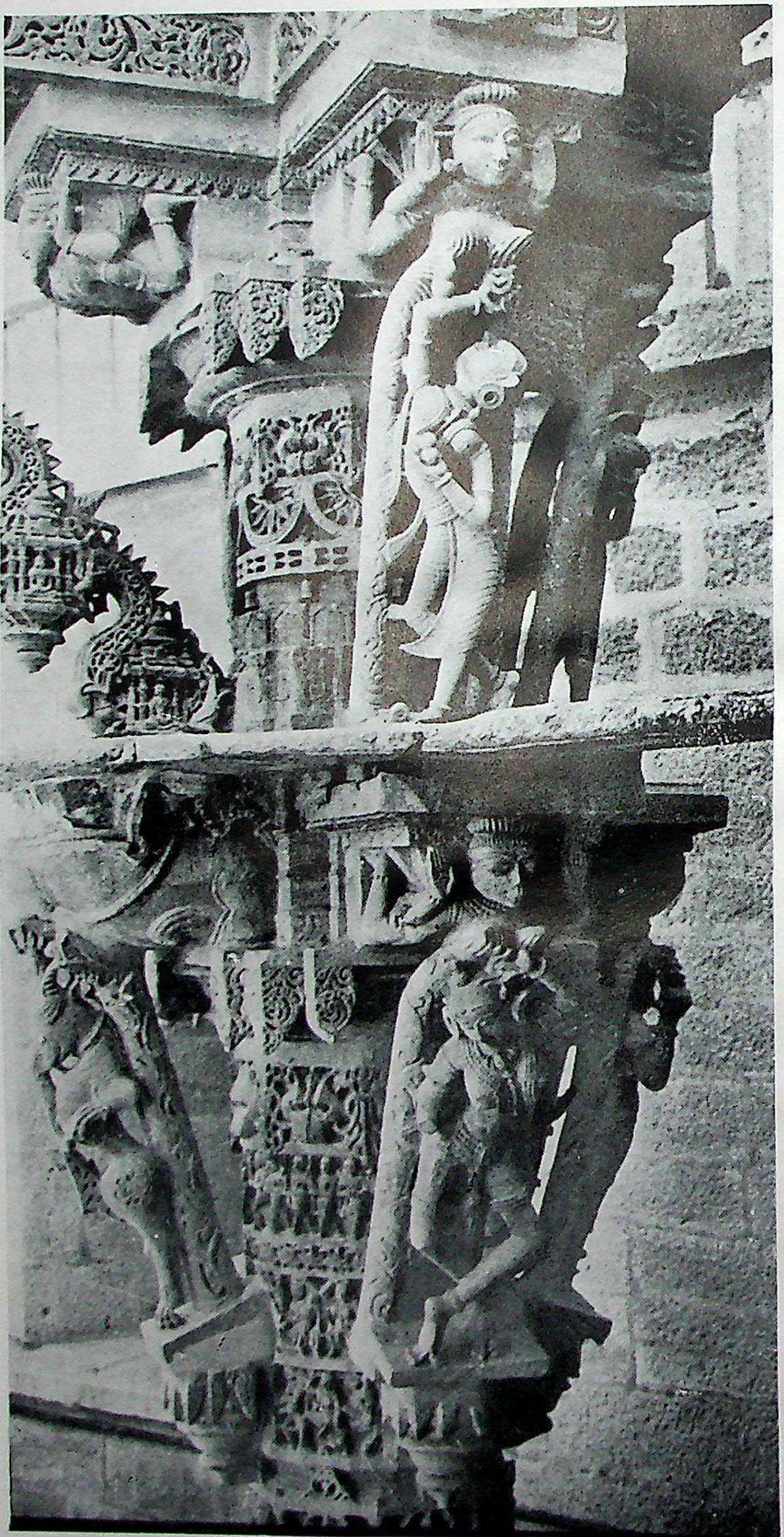




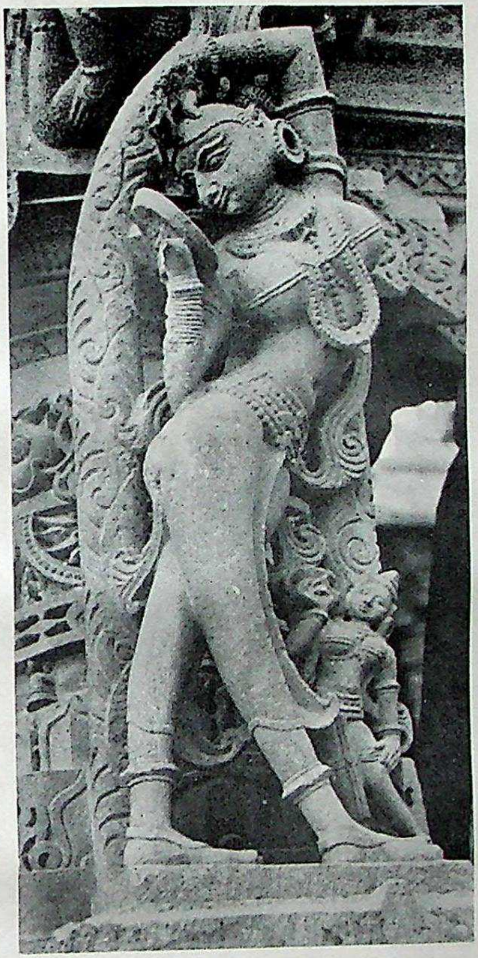
64. Idol of Shri Rishabhadevaji.

65. Idol of Shri Mahavira.



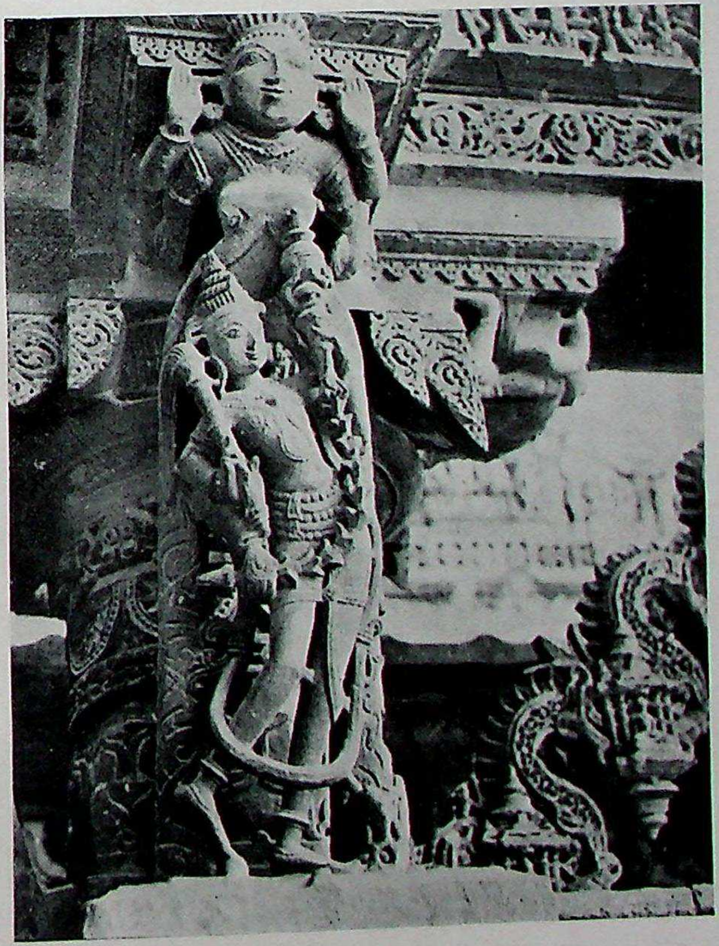


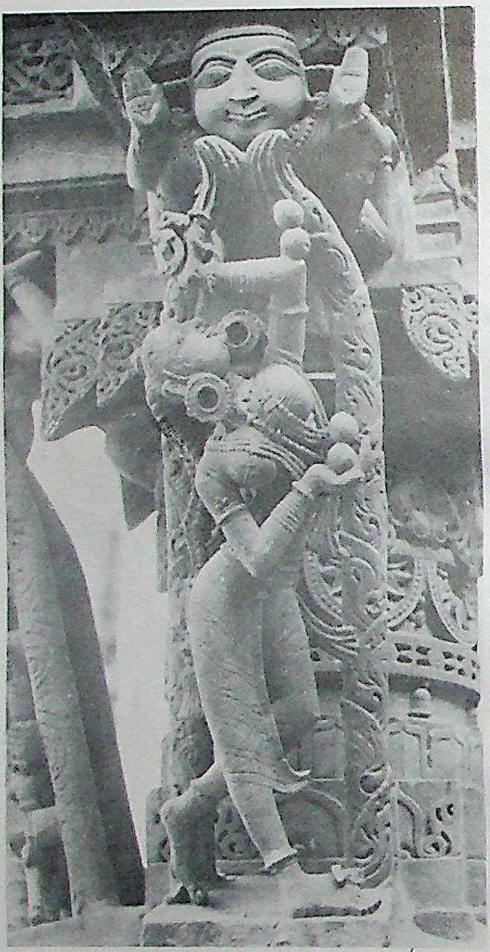
66. Damsels on a *torana* of Parsvanathaji temple in the fort.



67. Belle at toilet, *torana* of Parsvanathaji temple in the fort.

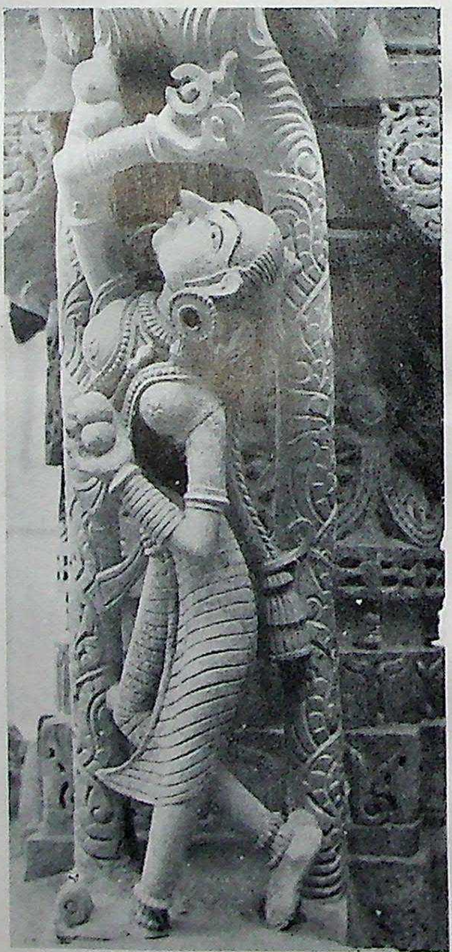
68. *Yaksha* as a sentry on a *torana* pillar, Parsvanathaji temple in the fort.

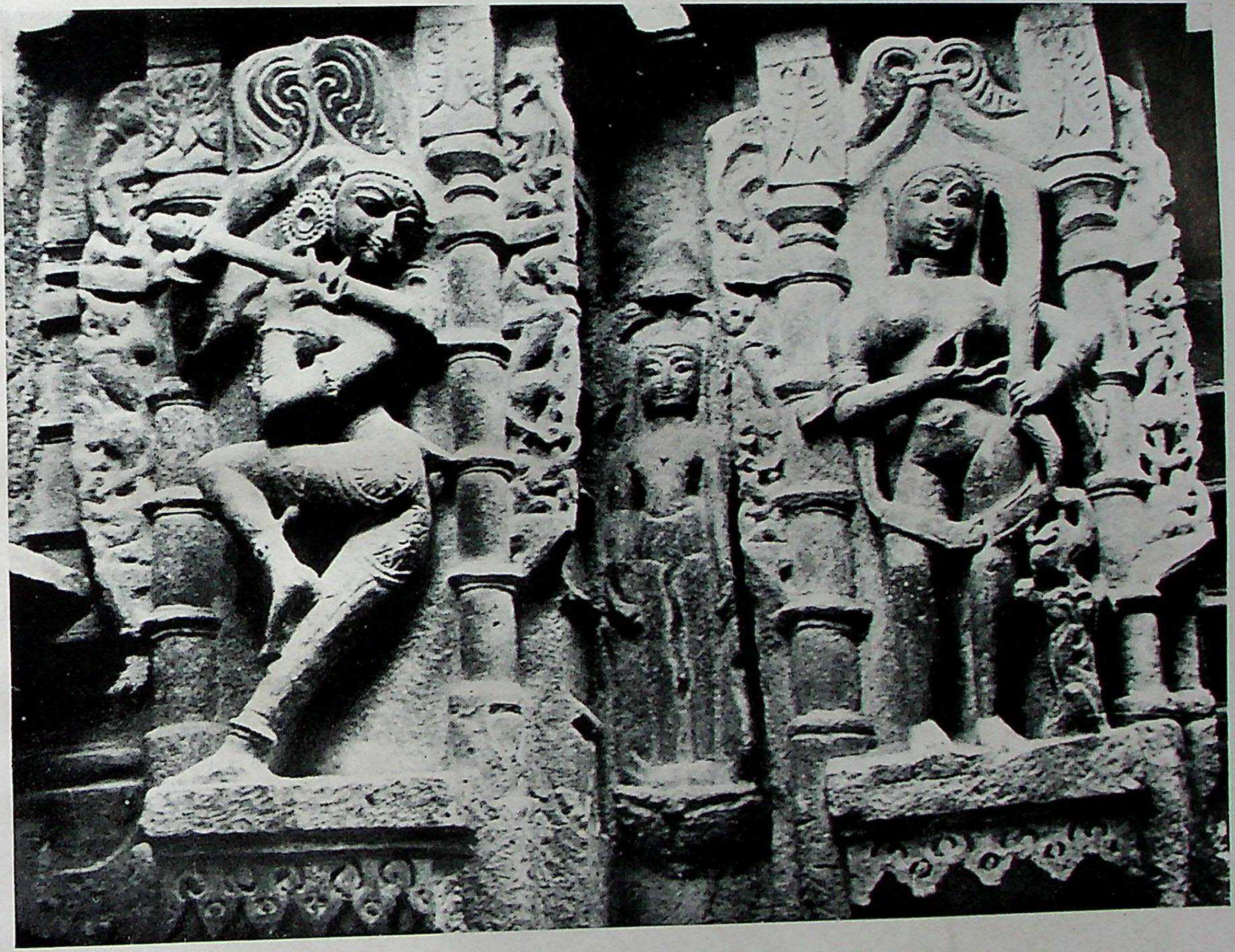




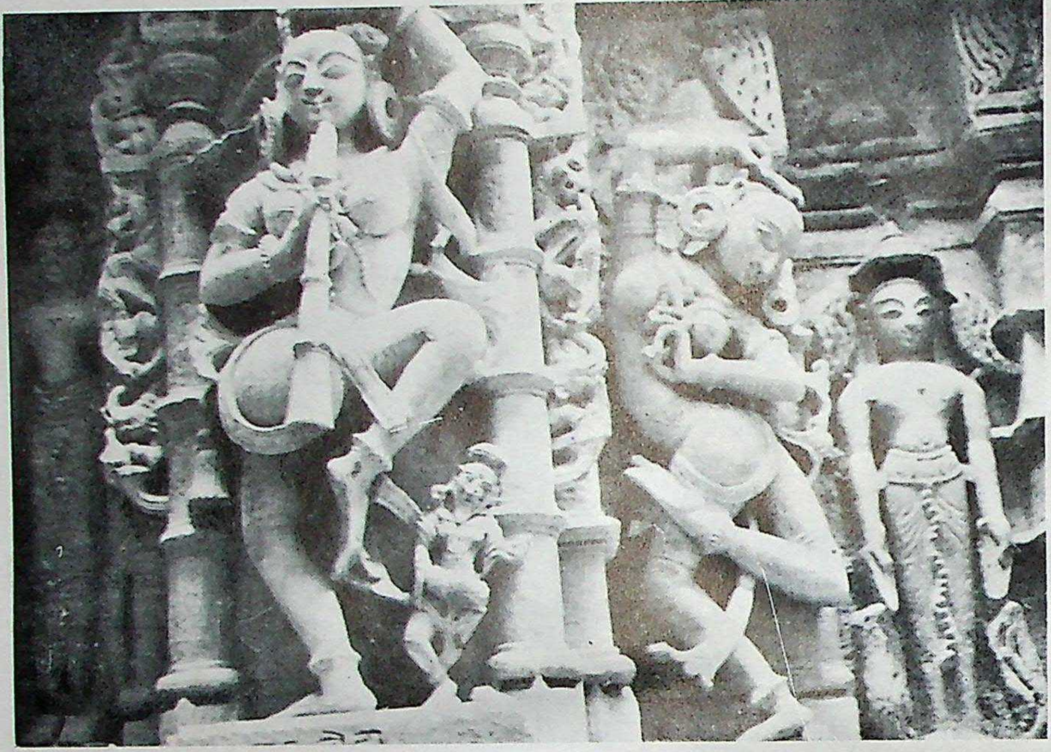
69. Damsels playing with balls from *torana* of Parsvanthaji temple.

70. A sporting lass from *torana* of Parsvanathaji temple.

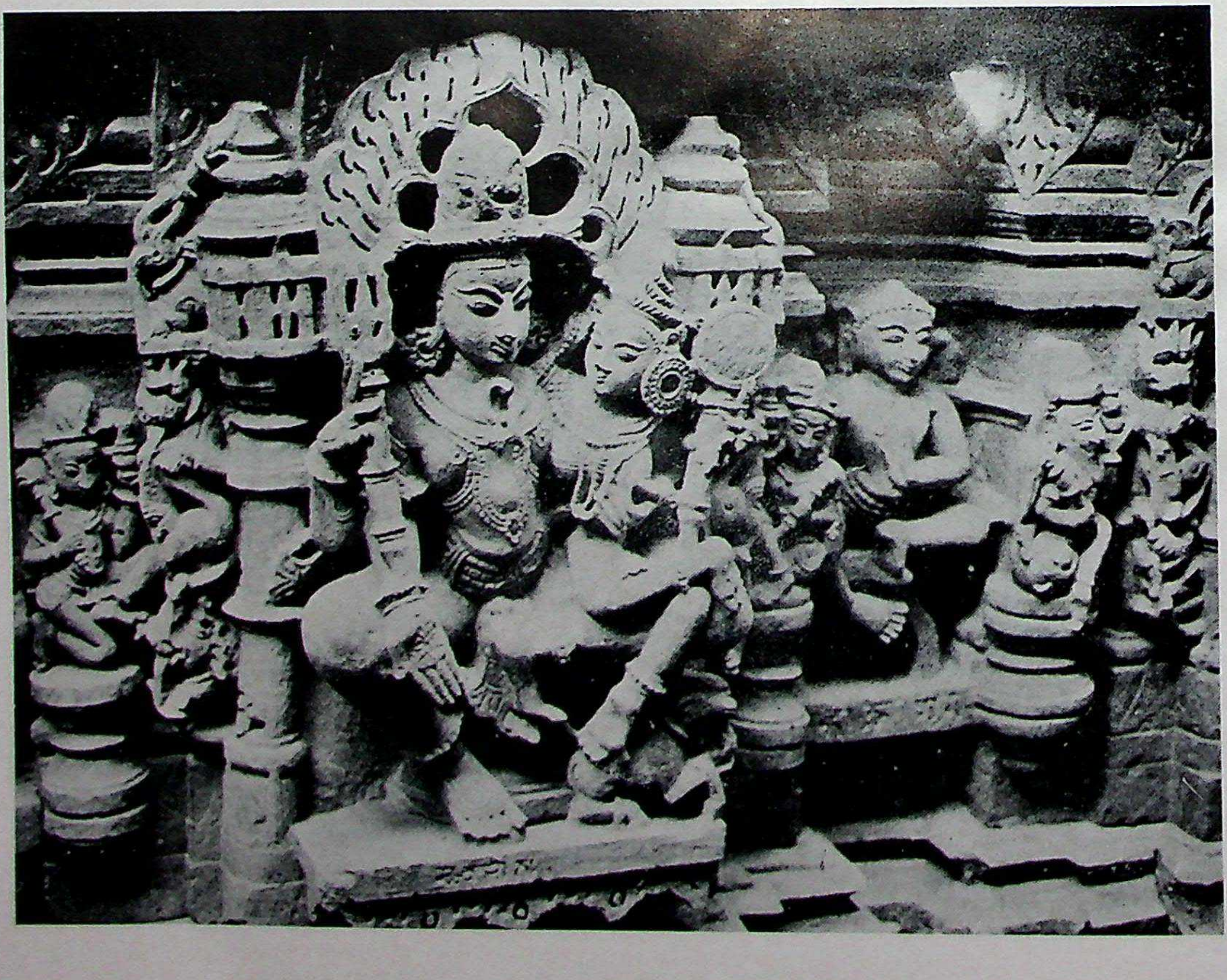




71. Damsels in colourful mood, Astapadaji temple, fort.



72. Music and dance ecstacies Astapadji temple.
73. Uma-Maheshvara, Shantinathaji temple.



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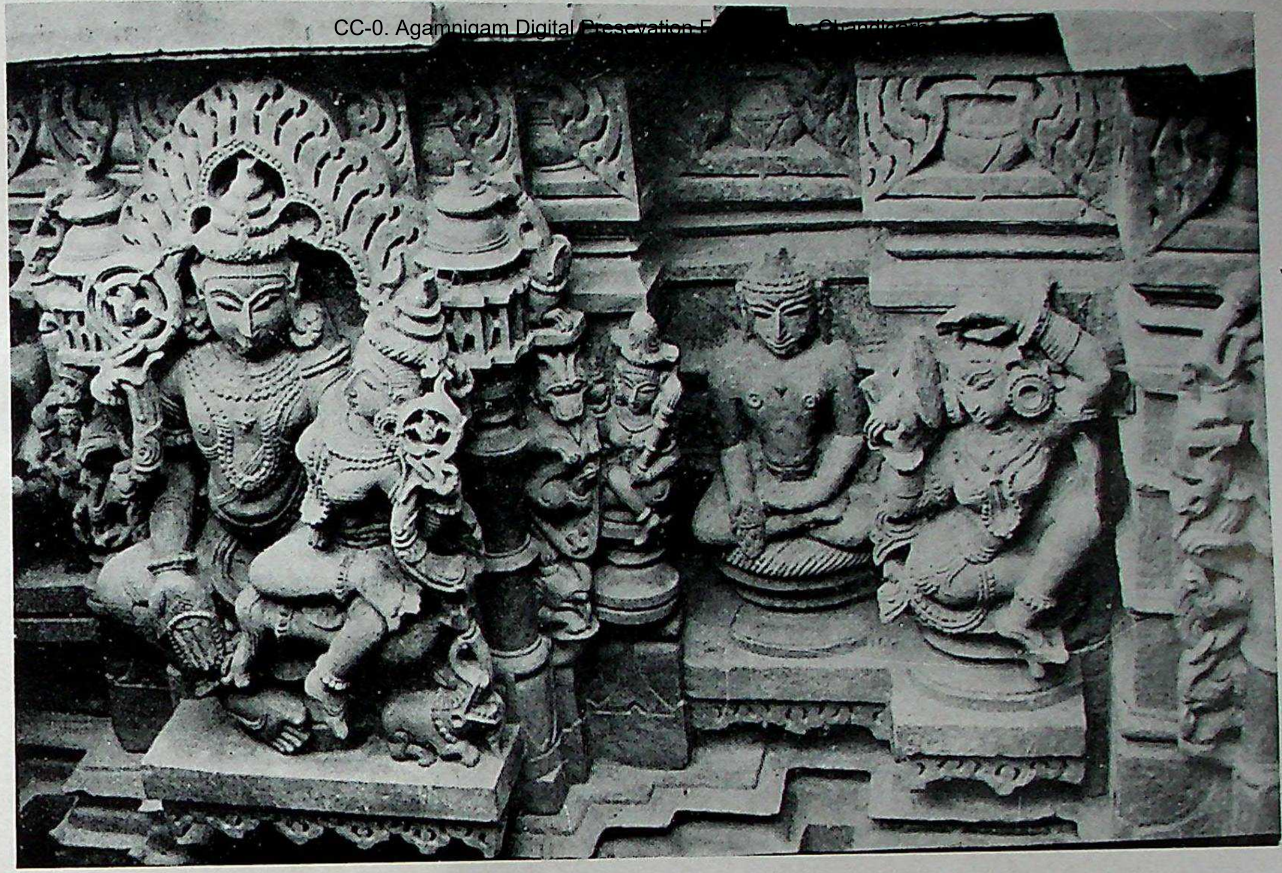
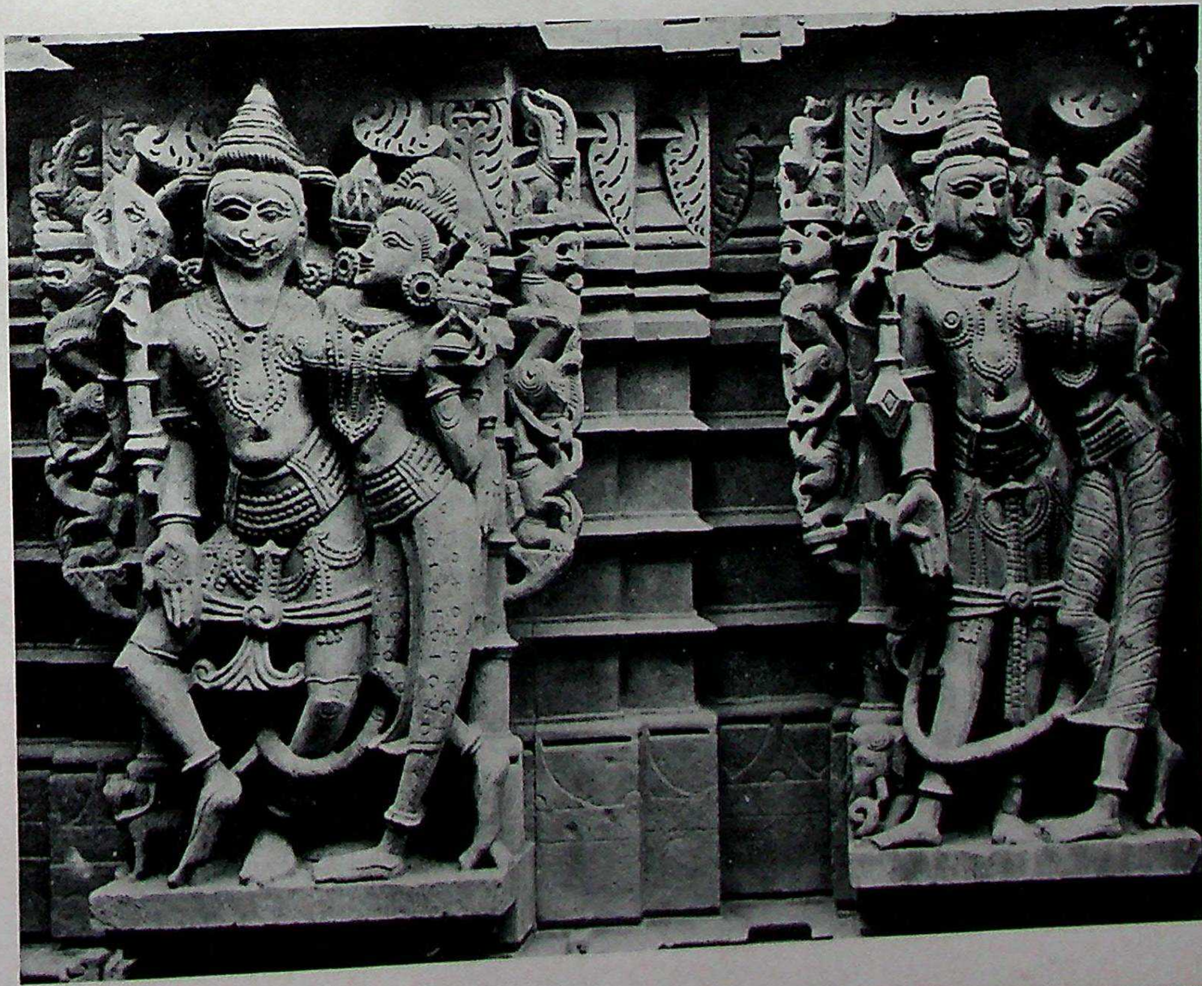
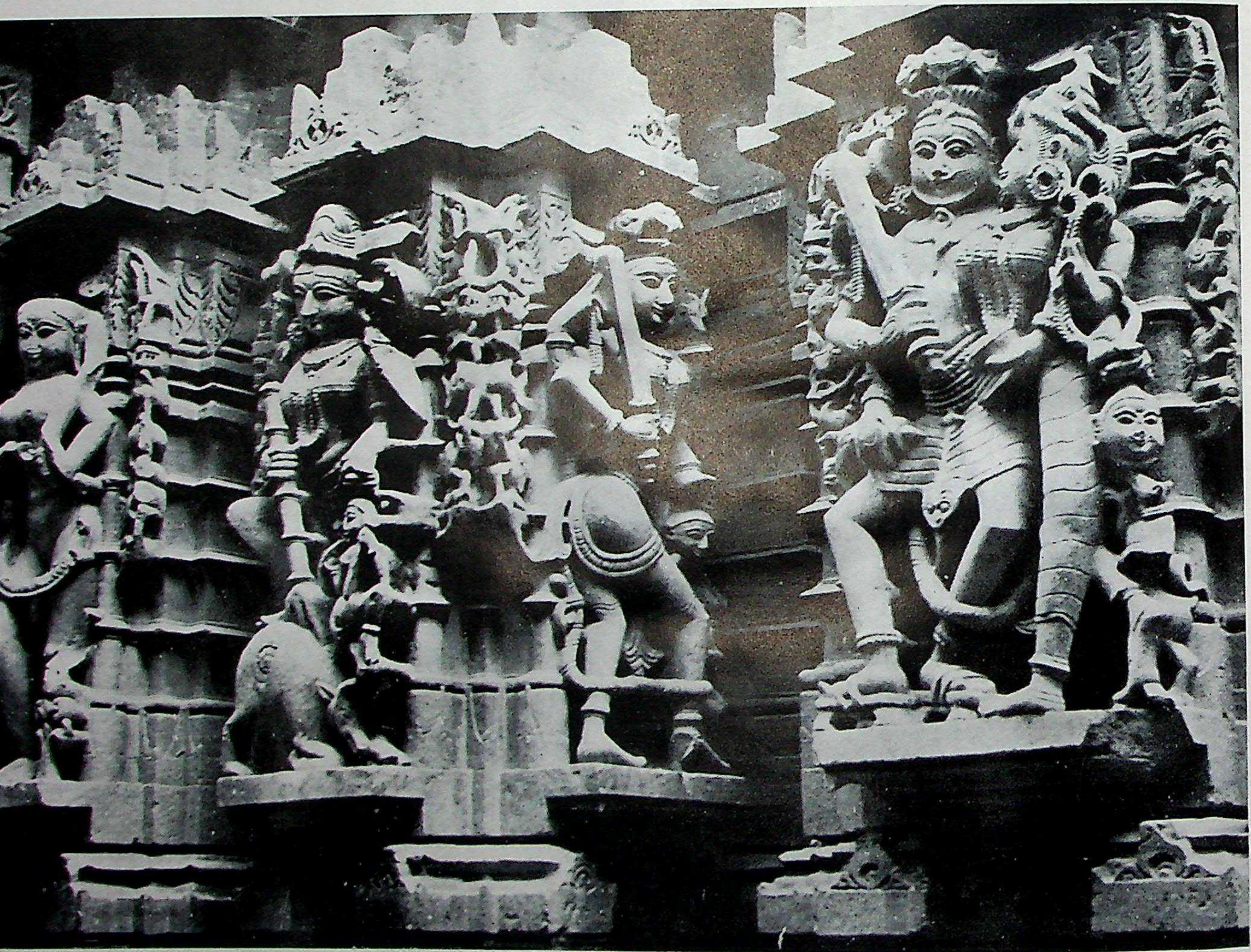


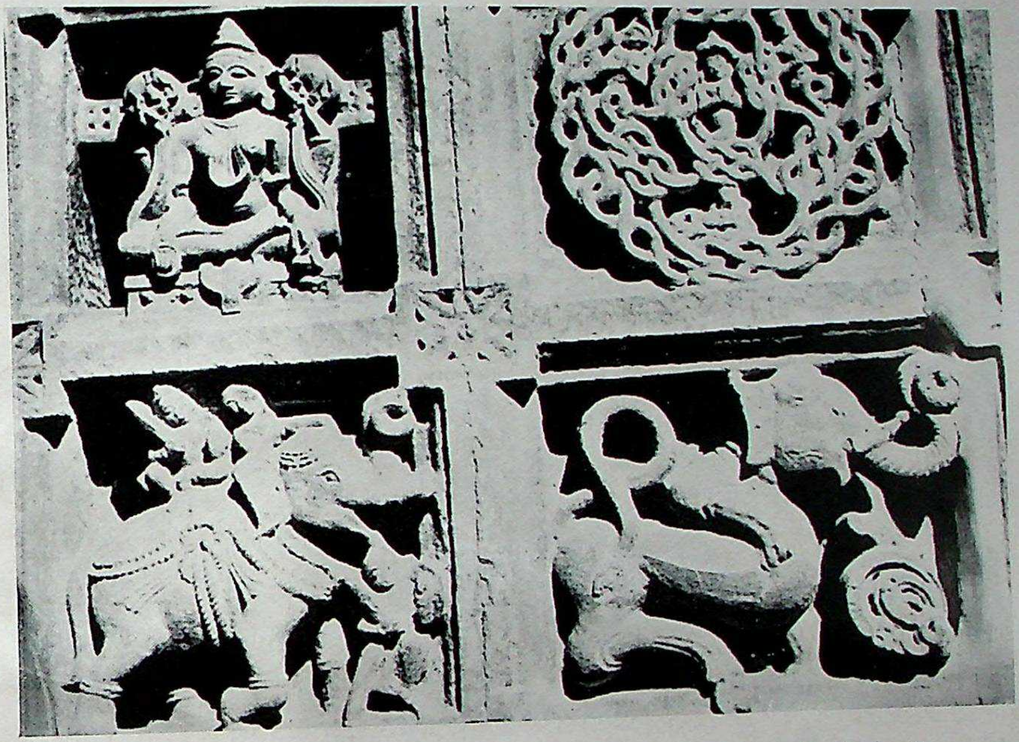
74. Carved divinities, Astapadaji temple.

75. Ishvara-*Yaksha* and Manavi (left), Indra-Jaya (right) from Shantinathaji temple.



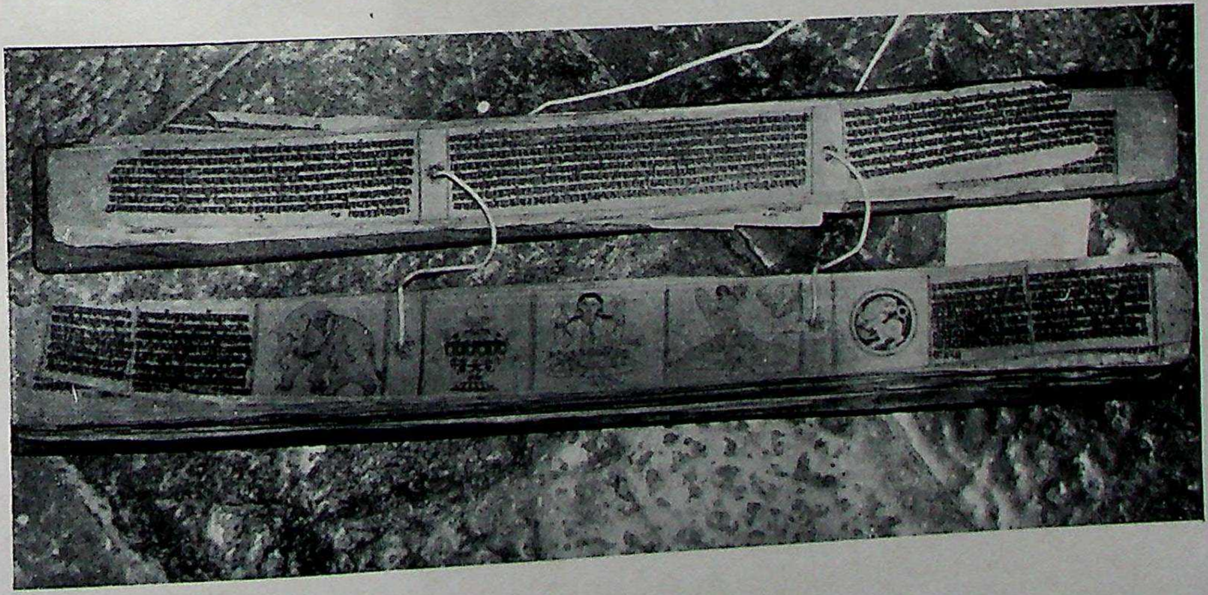


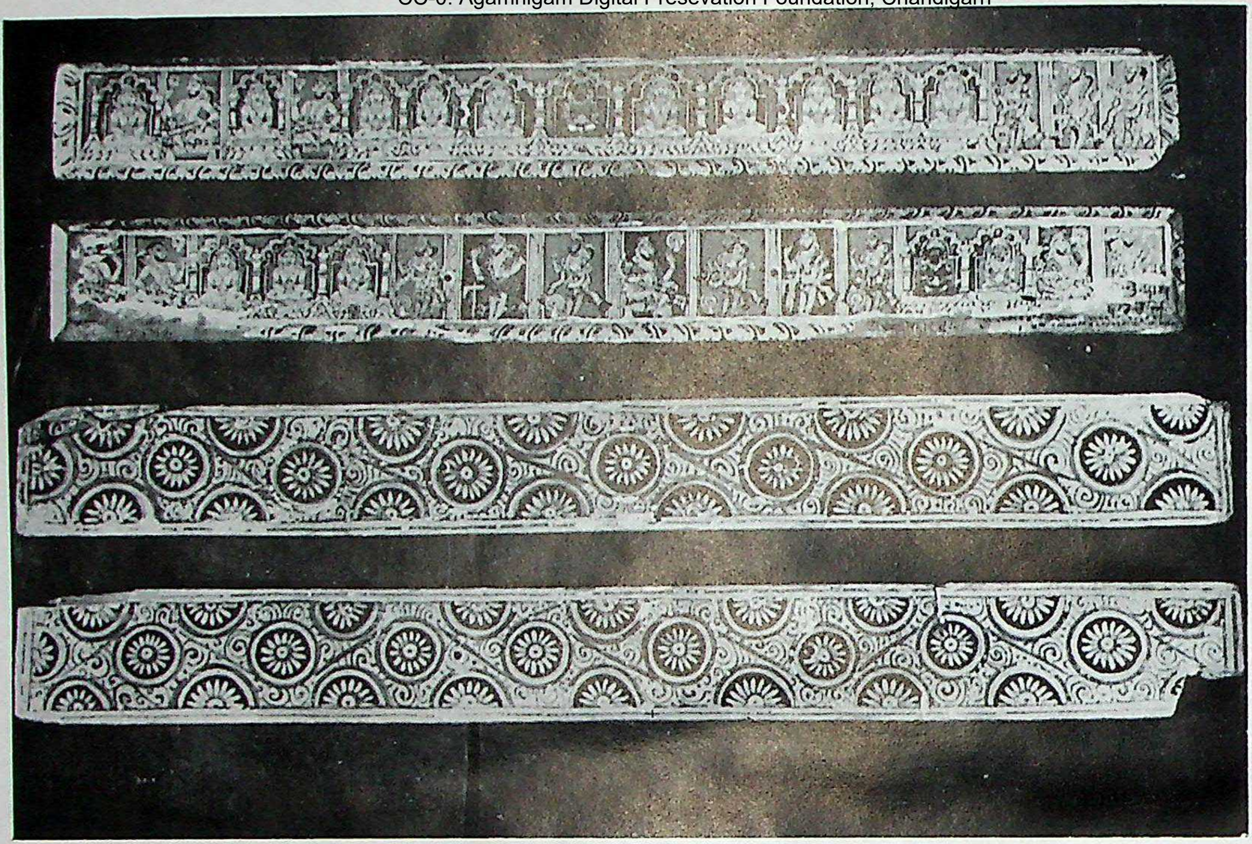
76. Shaivite-Divinities, Astapadaji temple.



77. Decorative renderings in the fencing panels, Shitalnathaji temple.

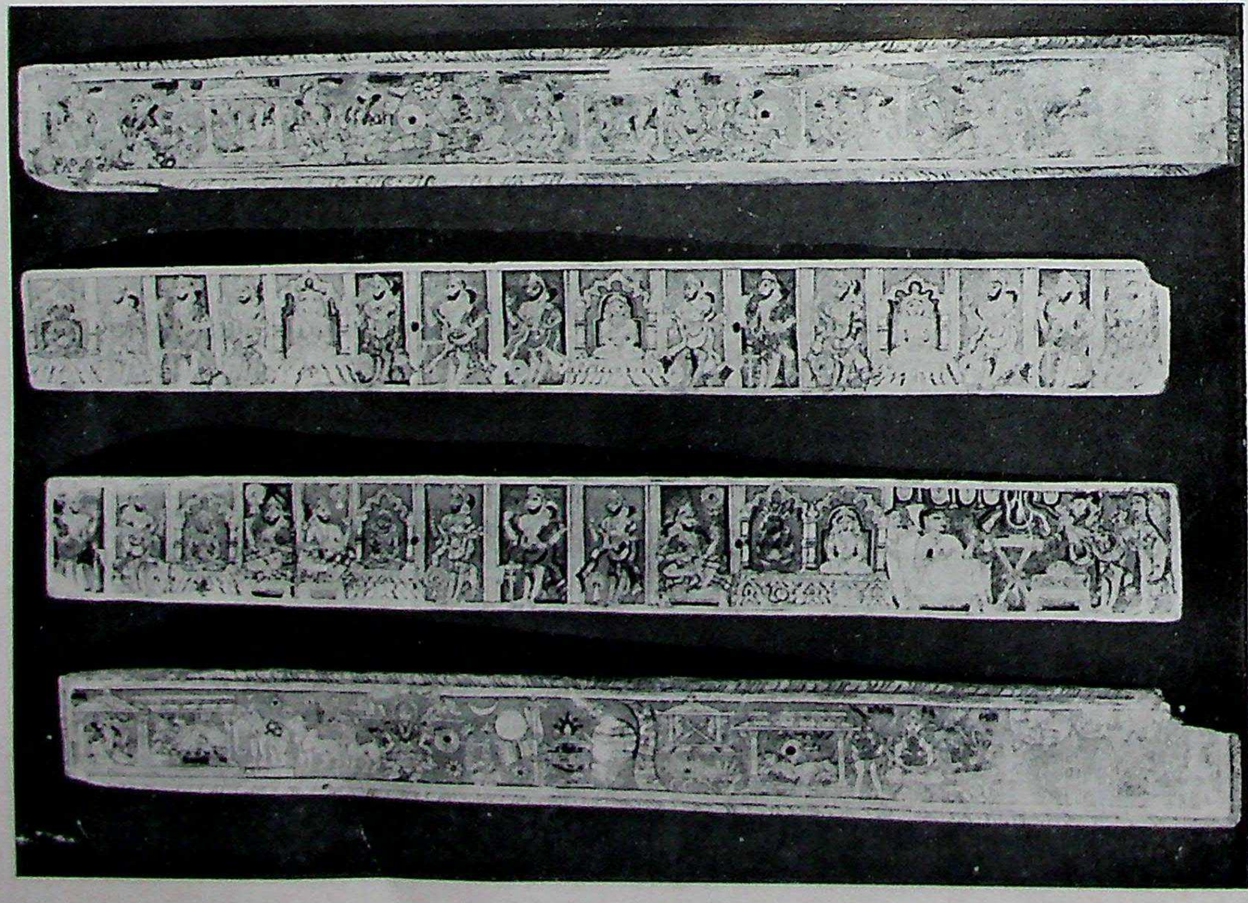
78. A painted folio from palm-leaf manuscript *Ogha Niryakti Vritti* dated A.D. 1060 from Gyan Granth Bhandar, Jaisalmer fort.

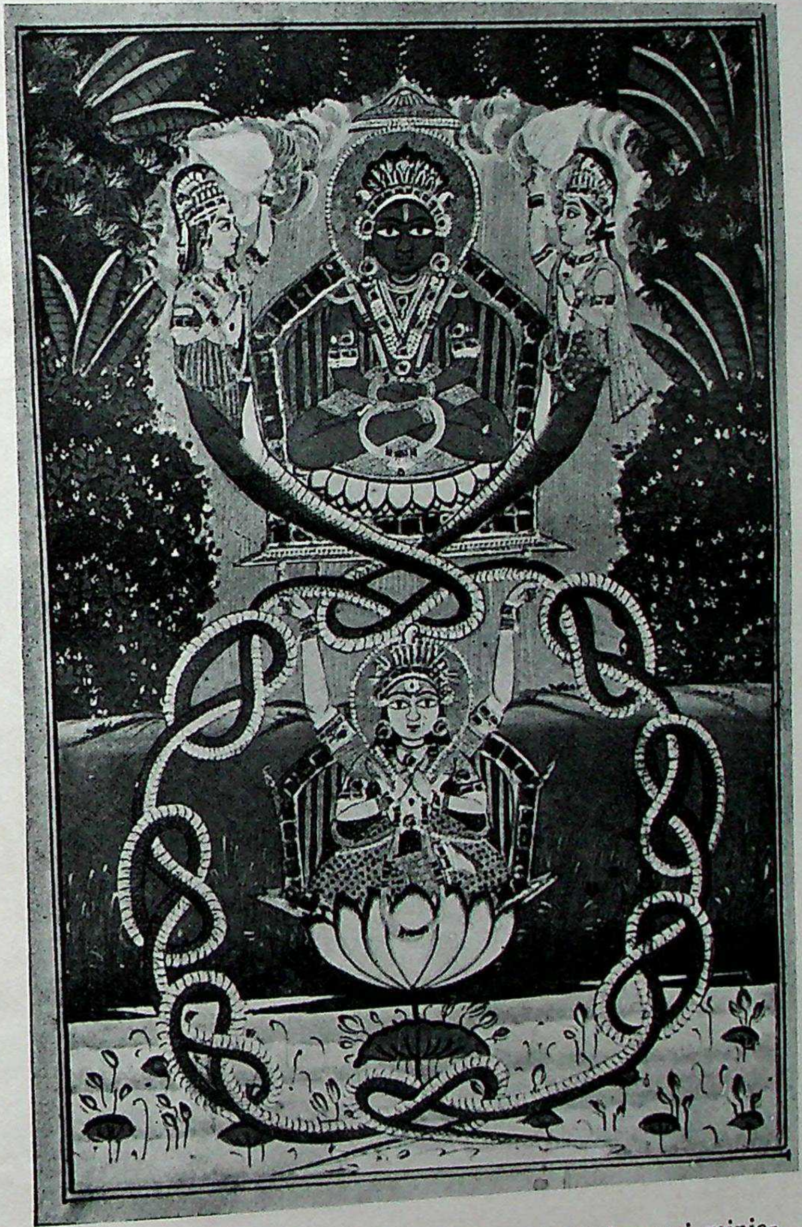




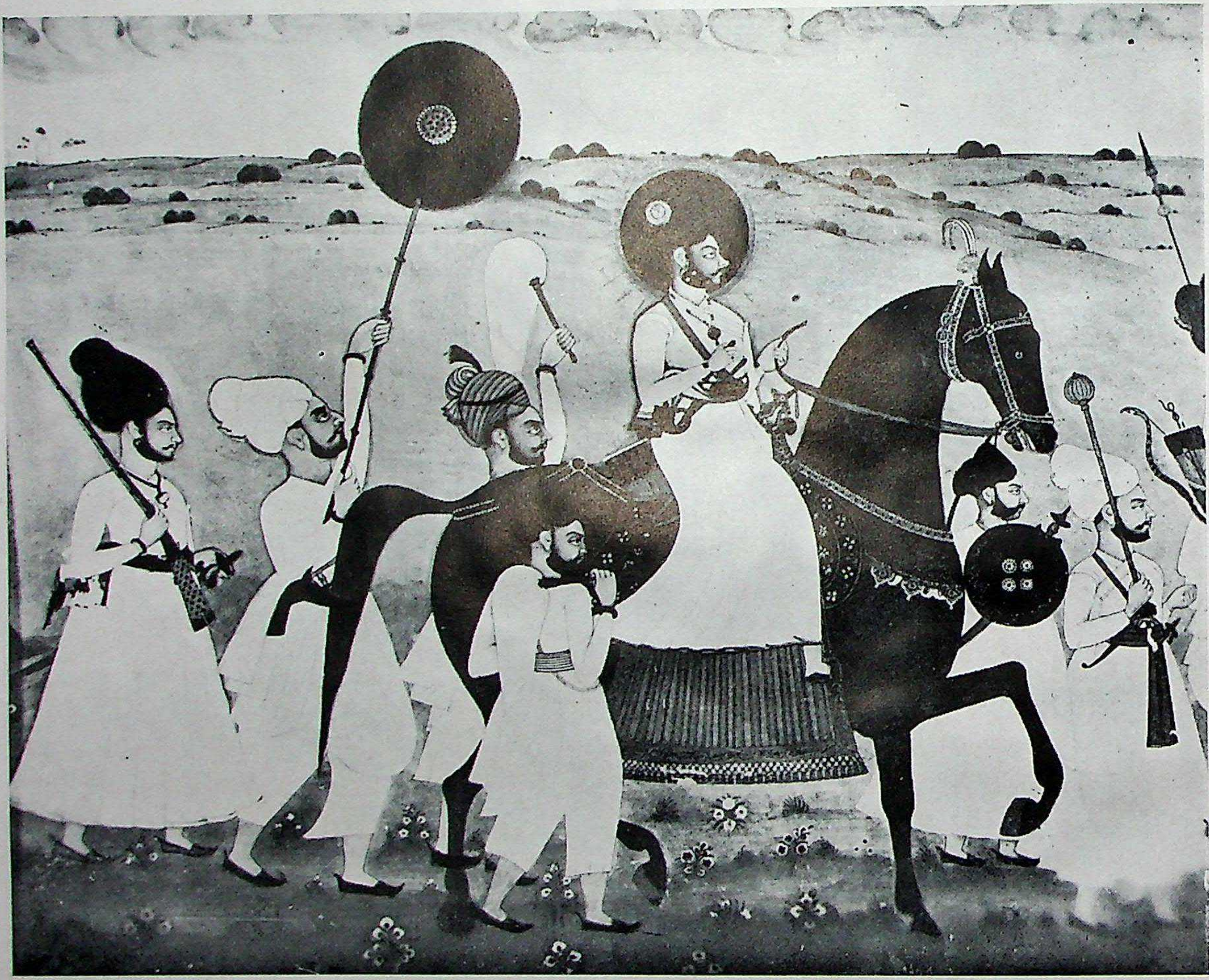
79. Painted wooden covers of manuscripts from Gyan Granth Bhandar, Gujarati-Jain style, *c.* 13th cent. A.D.

80. Jaina mythological paintings on wooden covers, Gyan Granth Bhandar, Gujarati-Jain style, *c.* 13th cent. A.D.

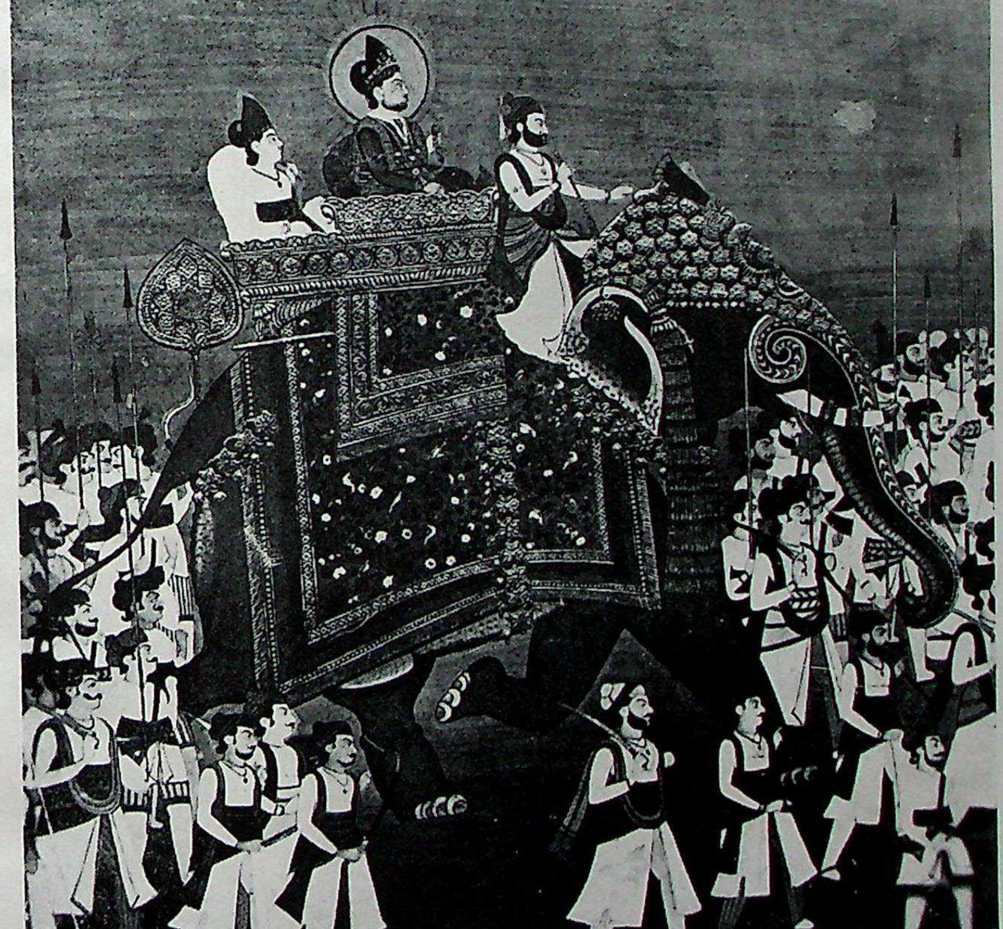




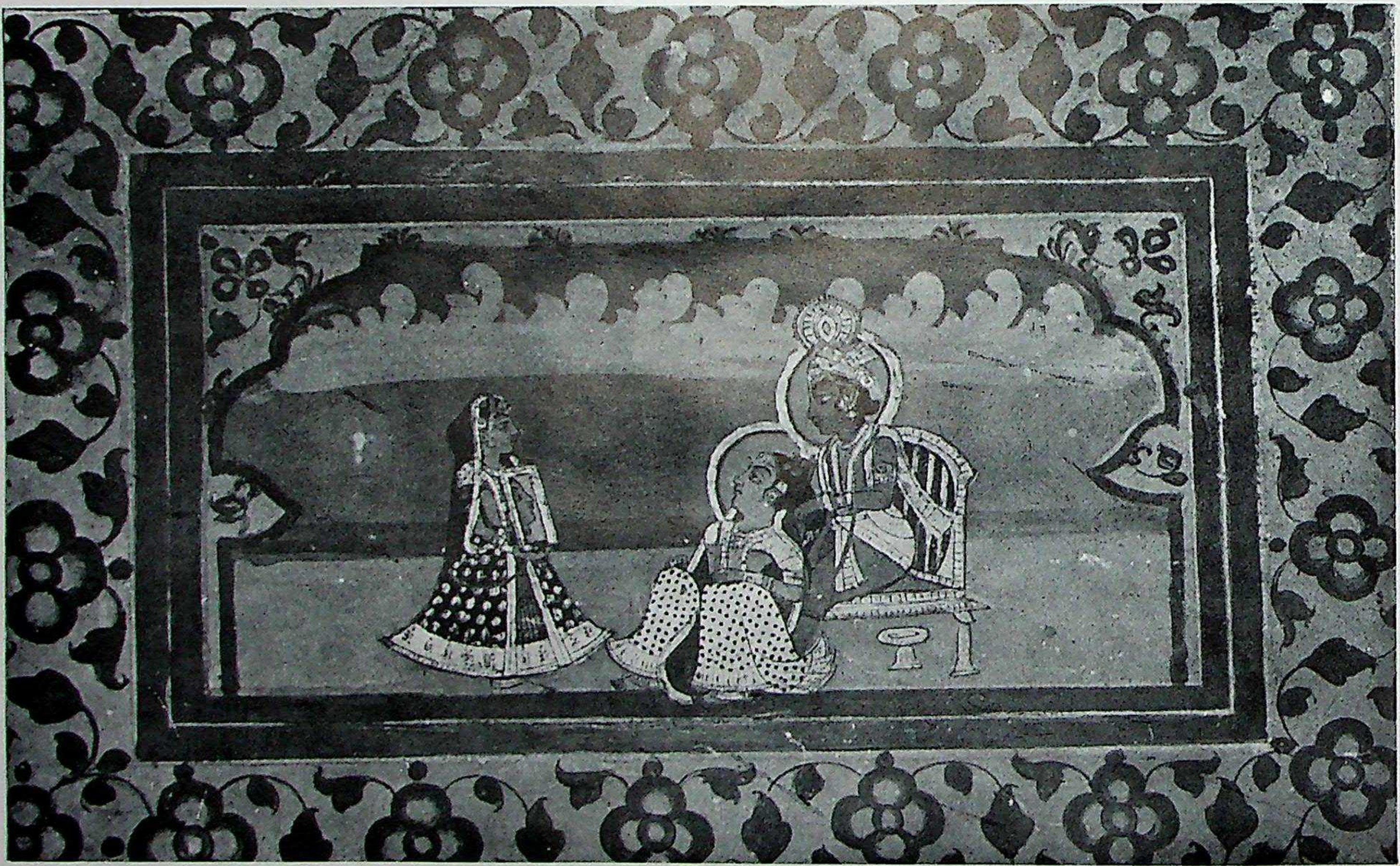
81. Parsvanathaji and Goddess Dharanendra Padmavati, miniature painting of Jaisalmer School, courtesy – Gyan Granth Bhandar.



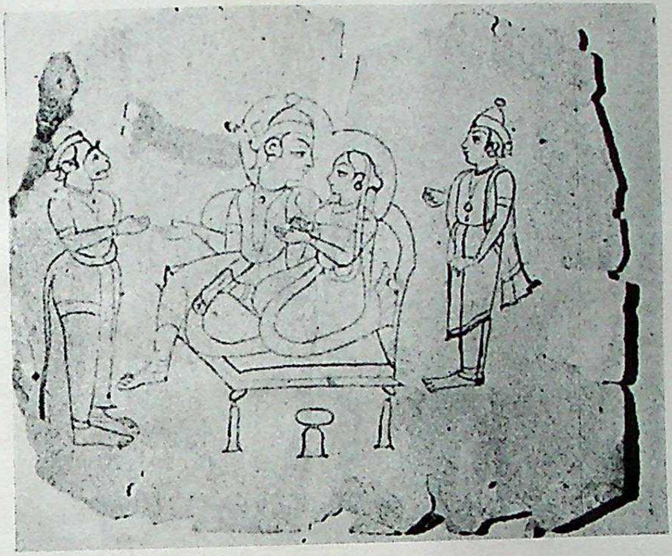
82. Maharawal Mul Raj II with his retinue, miniture-painting of Jaisalmer School, third quarter of the 19th cent. A.D.



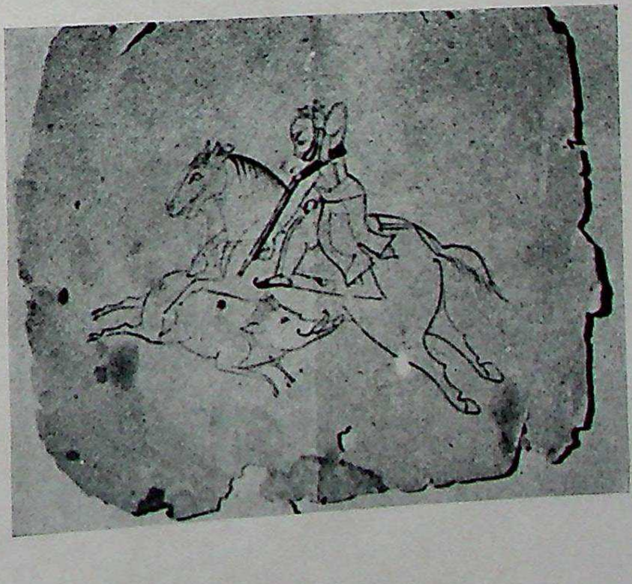
83. Maharawal Gaj Singh with his retinue, miniature-painting of Jaisalmer School, *c.* A.D. 1875.



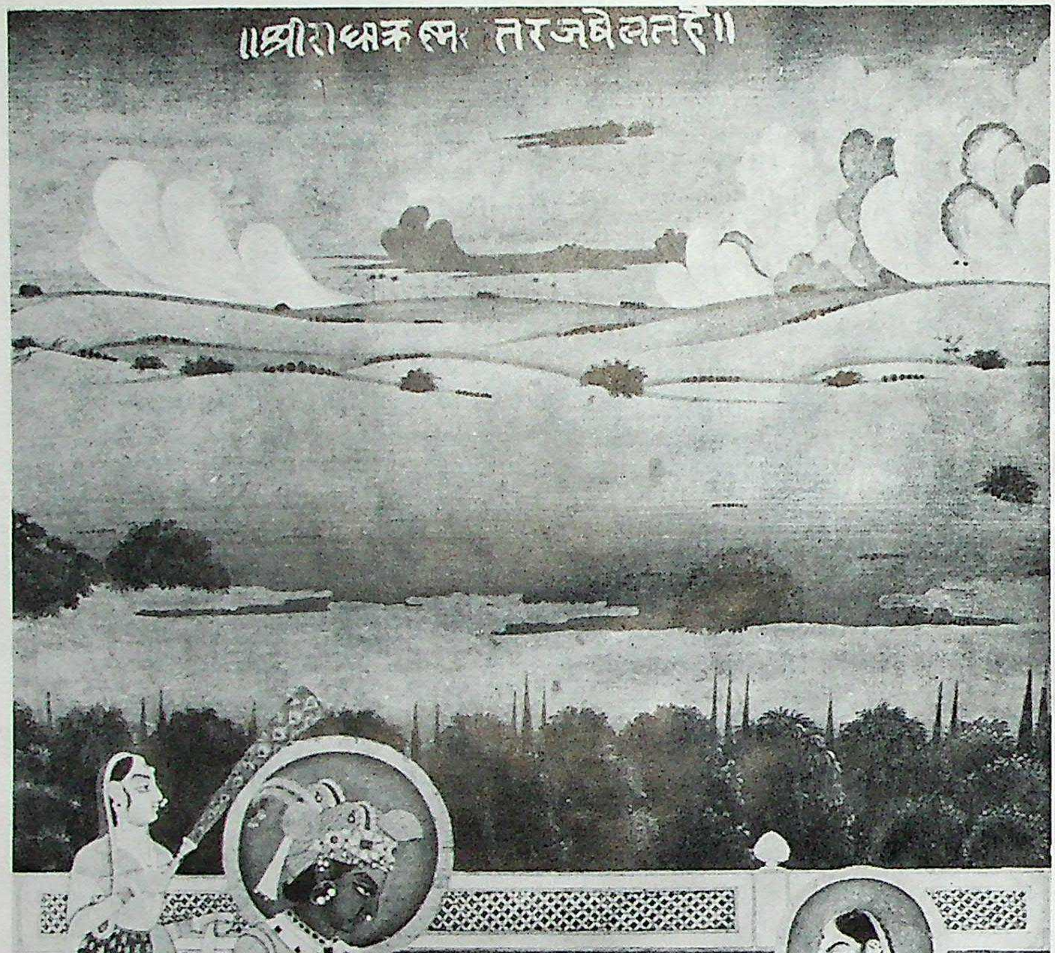
84. Krishna combing Radha's hair, Rangmahal mural.



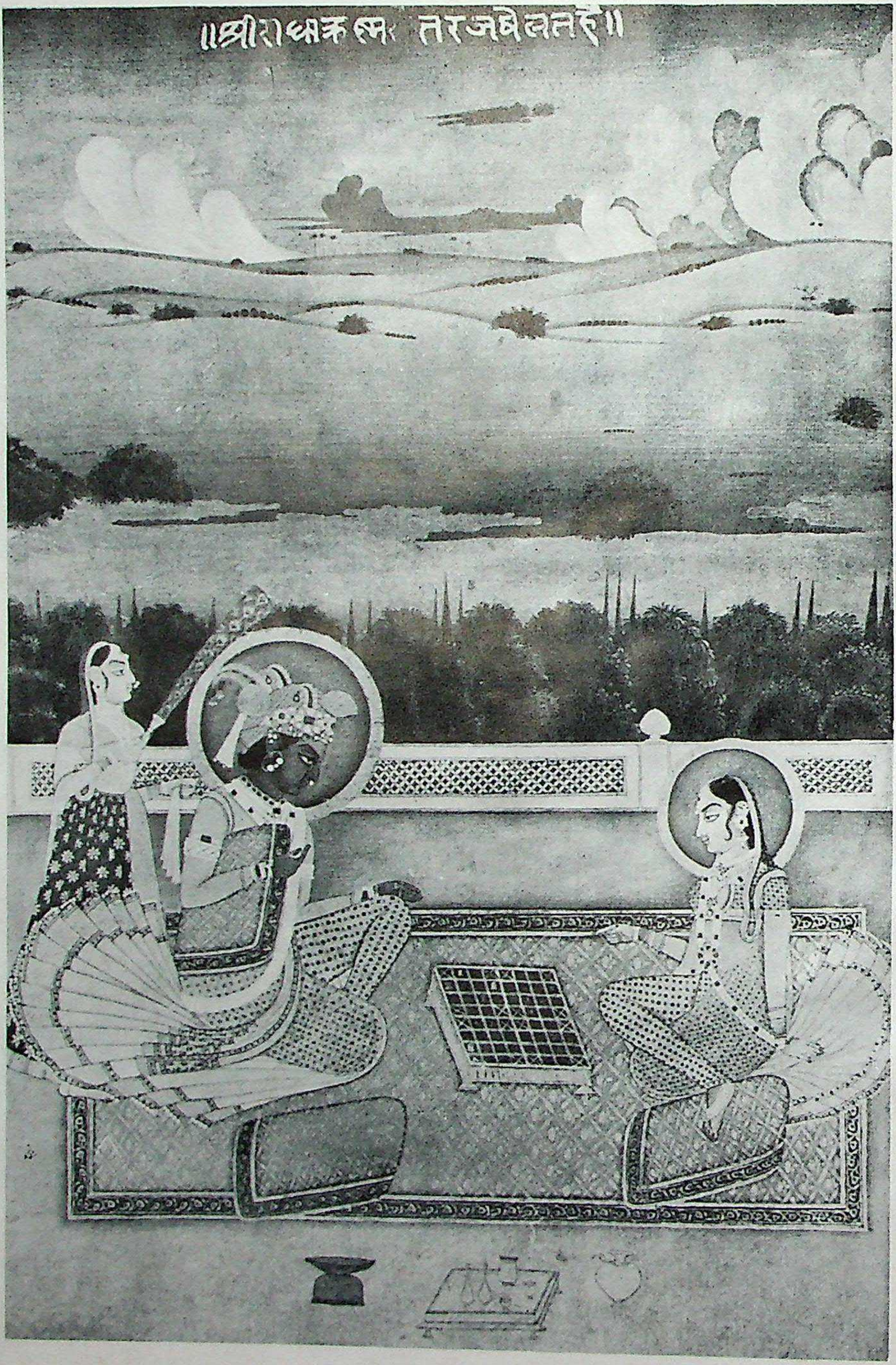
85. Ram-Sita with Hanuman, a line-drawing of Jaisalmer School *c.* A.D., 1870, author's collection.



86. Boar-hunt, a line-drawing of Jaisalmer School, *c.* A.D. 1870, author's collection.


॥श्रीराधाकृष्ण: तरज खेलत है॥

87. Radha and Krishna playing the chess, Miniature-painting of Jaipur School, *c.* A.D. 1800, Courtesy-National Museum, New Delhi.


॥श्रीराधाकृष्णः तरजखेलतहै॥

87. Radha and Krishna playing the chess, Miniature-painting of Jaipur School, *c.* A.D. 1800, Courtesy-National Museum, New Delhi.

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